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Declaration and Testimony

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The DOCTRINE, Worship, Discipline
and Government of the Church of
SCOTLAND;

Agreeable to

The Word of God, the Confession of Faith,
the National Covenant of *Scotland*, and
the Solemn League and Covenant of the
Three Nations:

And against

Several Steps of Defection from the same, both in
former and present Times.

By some Ministers associate together for the Exercise
of Church Government and Discipline in a Presby-
terial Capacity.

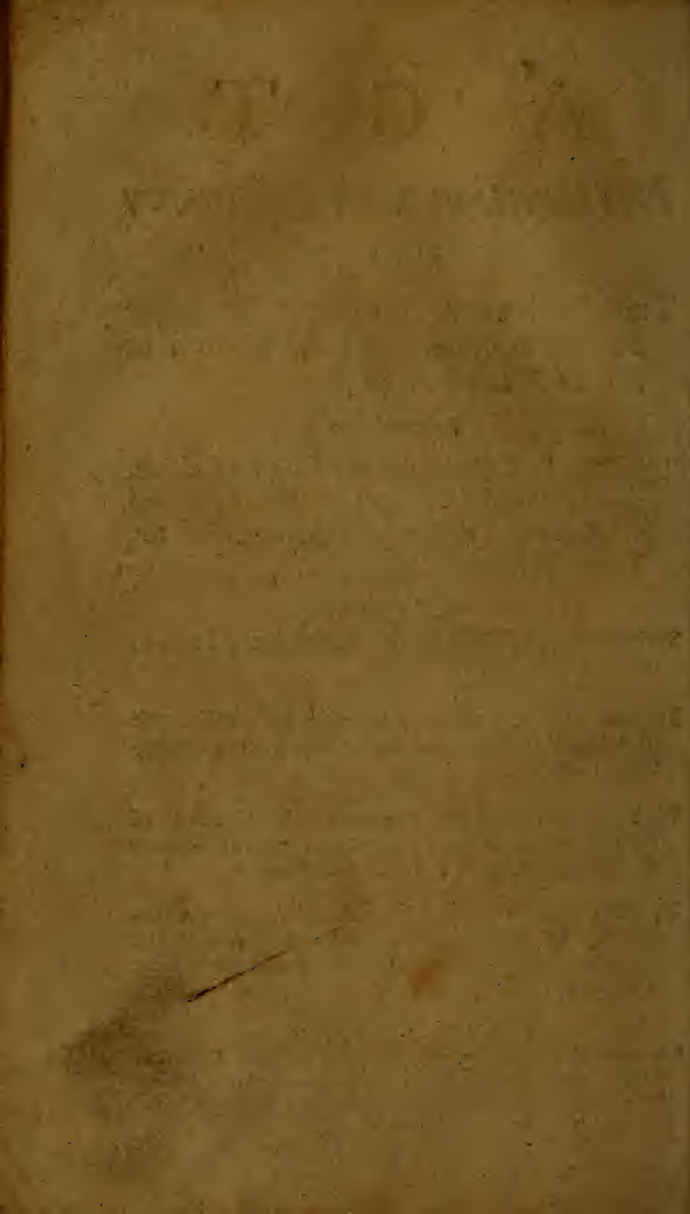
With an Introduction, containing the Grounds of
their Associating into a Presbytery, and the Reasons
of their emitting this Act and Testimony.

To which is also subjoined the Accession of the Re-
verend Mr. *Ralph Erskine*, and the Reverend Mr.
Thomas Mair, to the said Presbytery and the present
Testimony.

E D I N B U R G H.

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M D C C L I.





The INTRODUCTION.

THE *Commission* of the General Assembly that met at *Edinburgh* November 1733, having, by their Act and Sentence declared Mr. *Ebenezer Erskine* Minister at *Stirling*, Mr. *William Wilson* Minister at *Perth*, Mr. *Alexander Moncrieff* Minister at *Abernethy*, and Mr. *James Fisher* Minister at *Kinclaven*, to be no longer Ministers of this Church, &c. Upon the Intimation of the above Sentence, the foresaid Ministers gave in a *Protestation*, bearing a *Secession* from the Judicatories of the Church, and that it should be lawful and warrantable for them to exercise the Keys of Doctrine, Discipline and Government, according to the Word of God, Confession of Faith, and the Principles and Constitutions of the Covenanted Church of *Scotland*.

As the *Reasons* of their *Secession* were published sometime thereafter, in a Paper intituled, *A Testimony to the Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline of the Church of Scotland*; so, in Consequence of the last Part of their above *Protestation*, after mature and serious Deliberation, they came to a Resolution to constitute themselves into a *Presbyterial Meeting*, for the Exercise of Church Government and Discipline, as the Lord should clear up their Way: And that for the following weighty *Reasons*.

I. The Keys of Government and Discipline are given to Ministers, and belong to the Pastoral Office, as well as the Key of Doctrine; with this Difference, That the Key of Doctrine may be exercised by every single Pastor alone; whereas the Key of Government and Discipline must be exercised by Pastors two or three in collegio. And when they considered that four

Ministers, being thrust out all at once from Ministerial Communion with the present Judicatories, were a competent Number for associating together for the Exercise of Government and Discipline, they judged it a special and very particular Call in Providence, to associate themselves Presbyterially, that they might be in a Condition and Capacity to exercise all the Parts of their Pastoral Office, according to the Power and Authority given them by the Lord Jesus, *Matth.* 16. 19. Chap. 18. 18. *John* 20. 23. and his express Command to feed the Church and Flock of God, *Acts* 20. 28. 1 *Pet.* 5. 2. the original Word in both Places signifying the *Exercise of Rule and Government*, as well as that of *Feeding* by the *Preaching of the Word*.

2. As they judg'd themselves warranted to associate together for the exercise of Government and Discipline, from the Power and Authority given them from the Lord Jesus; so they were encouraged to this Step from the Promise of the Divine Presence, *Matth.* 18. 20. It being plain from the Context, that by *gathering together in Christ's Name*, is chiefly intended meeting together in a *judicative Capacity*, for the Exercise of the Keys of Government and Discipline; therefore they judged, that, when they were constitute in his Name, they had a more especial Claim to the above Promise.

3. When they were cast out from Communion with the Judicatories, they also judged it necessary for them to enter into a Presbyterial Association, not only for maintaining that *Order* among themselves, which is required by the Word of God, and by the approved Acts and Constitutions of this Church; but also to *distinguish* themselves from the *of the Sectarian and Independent Way*, who lodge the Keys of Government and Discipline in the *whole Community of the Faithful*, as they speak, and who refuse the due Subordination of Congregational Elderships to superior Judicatories.

4. It had considerable Weight with them, to determine them to this important Step, when they considered

Introduction.

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sidered the *deplorable Situation* of many Congregations in *Scotland*, groaning under the Weight of Violence and Oppression by the *Intrusion* of Ministers upon them, and crying for Help and Relief from the Judicatories of the established Church, but finding none: Therefore, since by adorable Providence they were thrust out from the Judicatories, they judged, that, if they entered into a *Presbyterial Association*, they would be in a better Capacity for affording *Help* and *Relief* to the oppressed Heritage of God through the Land, according to the Word of God, and the Rules and Constitutions of the Church of *Scotland*.

5. They likewise thought it incumbent upon them, not only to testify *doctrinally*, but to endeavour to lift up a *judicial Testimony* for *Scotland's* Covenanted Reformation, and against the present Declinings and Backslidings from the same. And since the Judicatories were carrying on a Course of Backsliding, they thought it the more incumbent on them, tho' their Number was small, and their Hands weak, to improve the Opportunity Providence had given them, by using their Endeavours in a *judicial* Way, to bear Witness for the Truths of God, against a strong Current of Defection and Backsliding from the same. For these and other weighty *Reasons*, they did, *by solemn Prayer*, CONSTITUTE *themselves into a Presbyterial Meeting*, sometime after they were cast out from the Judicatories of the Church.

The *associate Ministers* agreed, that they would not be *sudden* in proceeding to any Acts of Jurisdiction, but resolved, before any such Procedure, to wait if the Judicatories of the Church would return to the Reformation-standards; and therefore they held their Meetings mainly for asking Counsel of the Lord, and for mutual Advice in their present Situation, and for strengthening of one another's Hands in the Way and Work of the Lord.

When the General Assembly met at *Edinburgh* May 1734, the Majority of the Members appeared to be opposite to the Measures taken by some former
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Assemblies and their Commissions. Among other Things enacted by that Assembly, they empowered the Synod of *Perth* and *Stirling*, under certain Limitations mentioned in their Act, to *restore* the *four* Ministers to their respective Ministerial Charges: They likewise pass an Act concerning *Ministerial Freedom*. And when some Time afterwards the Synod of *Perth* and *Stirling*, clothed with this delegated Power from the said Assembly, had taken off the Sentences pronounced by the Commission of the General Assembly 1733 against the foresaid four Brethren, it was the Judgment of many, both Ministers and private Christians, that they should have instantly acceded unto the Judicatories of the Church.

The foresaid *Ministers* having frequently met to consider what was their Duty in the present Juncture, the *Question* before them was, *If the Grounds of their Secession were removed by what the Assembly 1734 had done?* Or, if they were so far removed, that without *counteracting the Testimony*, which by a particular and special Providence was put into their Hands, they might *return* to the Judicatories of the Church? And having deliberately and seriously considered the foresaid *Question*, as the Weight and Importance of the Matter did require; and particularly having considered the Conduct of the Assembly 1734, with respect to the *Act* and *Sentence* of the preceeding Assembly, passed against themselves, whereby *Ministerial Freedom*, in *testifying doctrinally* against the Defections and Backslidings of this Church was *condemned*, and the Liberty of *protesting* for Exoneration against a sinful Sentence and Decision of a General Assembly, affecting the publick Cause and Interest of Christ, was *wrested out of the Hands* of the Ministers and Members of this Church; they found that the said Act of Assembly 1733 stands to this Day *unrepealed*; and that the Synod of *Perth* and *Stirling* were expressly bound up from judging in the *Legality* or *Formality* of the former Proceedings of the Church-judicatories in relation to this Affair, and
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from censuring any of their Proceedings against the four protesting Ministers, tho' in their Case Church-power was screwed up to a most exorbitant Height. Likewise they found, that the Act of the said Assembly 1734, concerning *Ministerial Freedom*, was so far from asserting that Freedom and Liberty, which belongs to the Ministers of the Gospel, and which in the present Case was contended for, that their *Testimony* in this Point was by the said Act *materially condemned*, in so far as the Act declares, *That due and regular Ministerial Freedom was not impair'd nor restrained by the preceeding Assembly's Decision in the Process against the foresaid Ministers*: And therefore the Act and Sentence of the Assembly 1734, alledged to be past in their Favours, together with the Act of the said Assembly anent *Ministerial Freedom*, instead of removing the Grounds upon which they found themselves obliged to declare a Secession from the Judicatories, did, upon the Matter, *condemn* the Testimony which they judged their Duty to give against the Proceedings of the Assembly 1732. All that was done by the foresaid Assembly 1734, in the Case of the protesting Ministers, was, That the Synod of *Perth and Stirling* was impowered, upon some political Considerations, to restore the said Ministers to their respective Charges; when yet their *alledged Guilt* and Crime, in *protesting* against the Decision of the Assembly 1733, is still *supposed*, and they stand *condemned* for the same. Likewise they found, that the Act concerning the *Presbytery of Dunfermline*, whereby unwarrantable Terms of Ministerial and Christian Communion are imposed upon the Ministers and Members of this Church, *stands still in Force*: As also, that no *judicial Testimony* was lifted up against the gross Errors overspreading the whole Land. Therefore, for these and the like *Reasons*, which are laid open more fully in a *Print* published immediately before the Meeting of the Assembly 1735, the *associate Ministers* had not Freedom to *re-enter* into the Judicatories of the Church, by the *Door* which was

at that Time opened unto them. But, in regard the foresaid Assembly 1734 did put some Stop to the unwarrantable Proceedings of former Assemblies and their Commissions, they judged it their Duty to continue their Meetings at that Time as formerly, without proceeding to any Acts of Government and Discipline.

When the General Assembly met at *Edinburgh* 1735, that Edge and Concern, which appeared to be in the preceeding Assembly, was somewhat cooled and blunted: For tho' it was press'd by Instructions from several Presbyteries that the *Acceptance of Presentations* might be duly *testified against*, yet this, and other Motions toward Reformation, were upon political Considerations laid aside; and tho' both this and the former Assembly appointed their respective Commissions to appoint a *National Fast*; yet, in these Acts for National Fasting, there was no *particular Enumeration* of the Evils and Defections of the Day and Time wherein we live: This, together with some other Steps taken by the foresaid Assembly, and which are more fully narrated in the following *Act and Testimony*, were a lamentable Evidence, that a sincere and thorow Reformation was neither aimed nor intended.

When the General Assembly met *Anno* 1736, they went still further backward from any Thing like true Reformation-work. They appointed the Presbytery of *Stirling* to proceed to the Settlement of a *Presentee* to the Parish of *Denny*, tho' the Elders and far greater Part of the People of that Parish were *dissenting and reclaiming*: Likewise they appointed the Synod and Presbytery of *Dumfries* to inrol the *Intruder* into the Parish of *Traquair*, as a Member of these Judicatories. And further, instead of condemning the many gross and dangerous Errors, vented by Mr. *Archibald Campbell* Professor of Church-history at *St. Andrews*, which have a manifest Tendency to subvert all Religion Natural and Reveal'd, they dismissed him without any Censure whatsoever: And (as

will

will appear in the following Act and Testimony) they have likewise *adopted* his pernicious Principle concerning *Self-love*; whereby, instead of removing the former, a new and strong Ground of *Secession* is added.

The *Ministers associate in Presbytery* having thus waited for a considerable Time, to see if the Judicatories of the Church would lift up a particular Testimony against the Evils of the present, and the Sins of former Times; but beholding with Regrete the Conduct of some former General Assemblies, that, instead of going forward in Reformation-work, they had gone visibly backward in many Instances: Therefore, after mature and serious Deliberation, they judged it their Duty, to emit a judicial *Declaration* or *Testimony* for the Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline of the Church of *Scotland*, and against former and present Defections from the same, and that for the following *Reasons*;

1. The Iniquities and Backslidings of former Times have never been particularly acknowledged, nor condemned by the Judicatories of this Church, since the Revolution; neither have the valuable Pieces of Reformation once attained unto by this Church and Land, nor the Contendings and Wrestlings of the former suffering Period against Defections from the same, been judicially justified and approved: tho' the former are just Grounds of the Lord's Controversy against the Land, and the latter the Privilege and the Honour of this Church.

2. Tho' the Backslidings and Defections of this Church are many, and a Flood of Error and Profaneness *at present* overflows the Land; yet a Banner is not *judicially* displayed for Truth, and against the prevailing Evils of the *present Time*; And therefore,

3. A judicial Testimony appears to be necessary at this Time, for the Glory of God, for the Information and Conviction of the present Generation, for the Information of *Posterity*, and that Truth may be transmitted to them with a suitable Testimony.

thereunto: For it must be own'd, that this is a Debt, which one Generation owes to another, to use their Endeavours, to transmit the Truths of God in their Purity unto them; and, when Truth is opposed and controverted, it ought to be delivered off our Hands to the following Generation, with a more solemn and peculiar Testimony unto it.

4. The Lord having, in his adorable Providence, permitted the Judicatories of the Church to cast out from Communion with them *four Ministers*, at a Time when the Current of Defection was strong; and they having at the same Time made a *Secession* from them, upon the Grounds contained in their *Protestation* given in to the Commission *November 1733*, and more fully laid open in their Testimony afterwards published; and these Reasons and Grounds of their Secession not being to this Day removed; they judge, that now when they have entred into a Presbyterial Association, for the Reasons above condescended upon, that the same adorable Providence calls them to lift up the Standard of a judicial Testimony for the Truths of God, and against a Course of Backsliding from the same: And to this they find themselves more especially and more particularly called, when they consider that a Testimony of this Kind has been so long wanting, and so much desired by many that fear the Lord thro' the Land; and tho' it has been so necessary, as has been already observed; yet there is now no Hope of obtaining it from the present Judicatories of the Church.

5. They were the more excited to emit this Declaration and Testimony, that they might make an *open* Confession of their Principles, that the World might see what they own and acknowledge, and upon what Foundation they desire, thro' the Grace of the Lord Jesus, to stand.

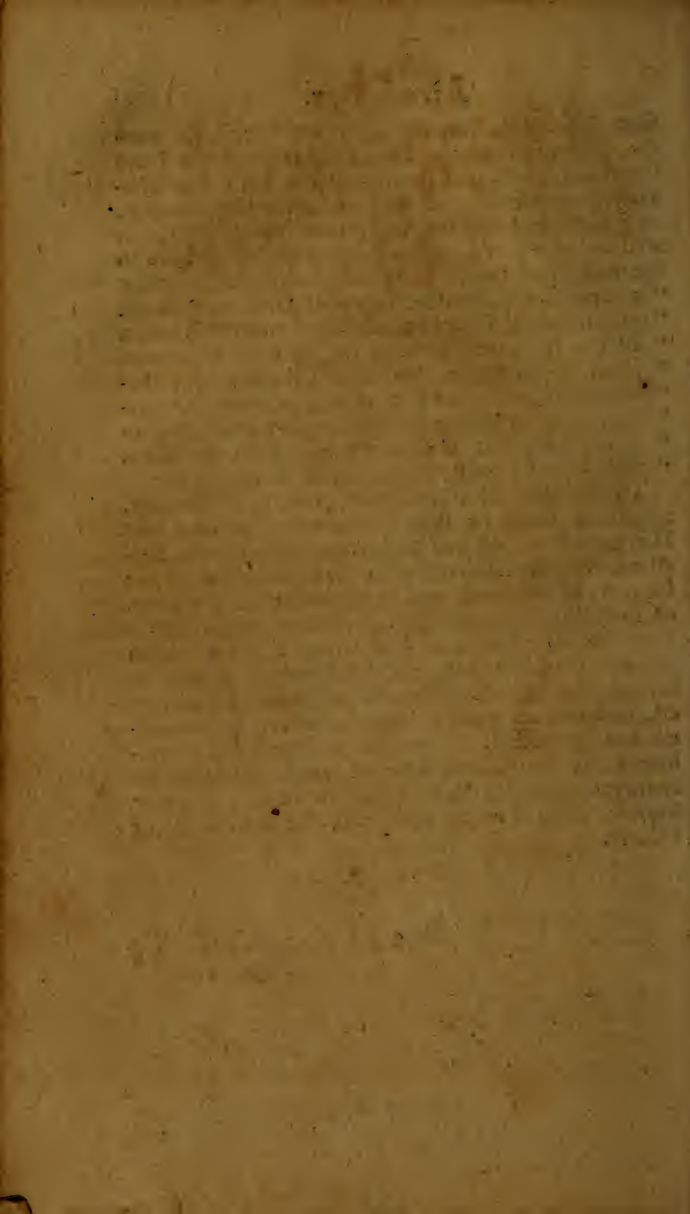
6. They reckoned themselves still the more obliged unto this Duty, both from the special and particular Engagements they came under at their *Ordination*, to fulfil that Ministry which they received
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from the Lord, whereby they are bound to *teach the Observance of all Things whatsoever* the Lord Christ *has commanded* them, and that not only *doctrinally*, but *judicially*, as the Lord gives Opportunity; and likewise from the Obligation which they, as well as the whole Land, are under by *solemn Oath* to the most High God, “ That we shall sincerely, really “ and constantly, thro’ the Grace of God, endeavour, “ in our several Places and Callings, the Preservation “ of the Reformed Religion in the Church of *Scotland*, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government; ——— and, that we shall not give ourselves to a detestable Indifferency or Neutrality in “ this Cause; but shall all the Days of our Lives “ zealously and constantly continue therein.”

The foresaid Ministers, being met in Presbytery, appointed some of their Number to prepare the Draught of an *Act and Testimony*, asserting the Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline of the Church of *Scotland*; and condemning several Steps of Defection from the same, both in former and present Times: And the said Draught having been prepared and laid before the Presbytery, it was, in several Meetings, seriously and deliberately considered, reasoned upon and amended; and, as thus amended and corrected, it was, at a Meeting of Presbytery at *Perth*, *December 3d 1736*, unanimously approved, *enacted*, and, for the above and like weighty *Reasons*, ordered to be published; the *Tenor* whereof follows.

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Declaration and Testimony

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The Doctrine, Worship, Government, and Discipline of the Church of *Scotland*, AGREEABLE to the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, the National Covenant of *Scotland*, and the Solemn League and Covenant of the Three Nations; and AGAINST several Steps of Defection from the same, both in former and present Times: By some Ministers associate together for the Exercise of Church Government and Discipline in a Presbyterial Capacity.

AT *Perth*, the third Day of *December*, One thousand seven hundred and thirty six Years. Which Day and Place the Presbytery being met, and taking into their serious Consideration the low State of Religion at this Day

Day, the manifold Defections and Backslidings of all Ranks, both in former and present Times, from the Truths of God, and the precious Ordinances and Institutions of Jesus Christ, delivered as a valuable Trust into his Church and People in this Nation; and to the Maintenance and Preservation of which, the whole Land stands indispensibly bound and obliged, by the most solemn Covenant-engagements: And especially, considering the present Growth and spreading of dangerous and pernicious Errors, and the many Injuries that are done to the Government and Discipline of the House of God amongst us; together with the abounding Sin, Wickedness and Profaneness of the present Generation, and the deep Security and general Stupidity that prevails under our national Sins and spiritual Judgments; by all which God is highly dishonoured and provoked, his Sanctuary profaned, the Kingdom of his Son undermined, and the whole Land involved in the dreadful Guilt of Apostasy from the Lord: Wherefore this *Presbytery* find themselves bound in Duty, to cast in their *Mite* of a *Testimony* to the many great and wonderful Appearances of the Lord for this Church and Land, and to the Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline of the Lord's House therein, agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, the National Covenant of *Scotland*, and the Solemn League and Covenant of the Three Nations; as also against the Injuries and insolent Indignities done unto, and the Encroachments, Violations and Breaches made upon the same.

To this they reckon they are warranted, from the Practice and Example of the Church and People of God, recorded in Scripture, who very often commemorate the remarkable Appearances made for them, the signal Deliverance they have met with, together with their own deep Ingratitude and heinous Provocations, both of an older and later Date; and also from the Practice and Example of this Church in for-

mer Times: And likewise they judge a *Testimony* of this Kind necessary, for the Information of the present Generation, who have generally lost the Knowledge, both of what God hath done for *Scotland*, and of the Grounds and Causes of his righteous Quarrel and Controversy against us; necessary, for the Conviction and Humiliation of all Ranks of Persons; necessary, to preserve and maintain the Truths of God, and an useful Mean to transmit them to following Generations in their Purity: Therefore, for all the above, and many other weighty Reasons and Considerations, the *Ministers associated*, being met in *Presbytery*, did, and hereby do, in the *first Place*, with thankful Hearts, acknowledge, and bear Record unto, the wonderful Power, Grace and Goodness of God, in visiting this Land very early with the Light of the glorious Gospel, whereby from these uttermost Ends, of the Earth were Songs heard, even Glory to Jesus Christ the Righteous; and thus the Promises and Prophecies given of old were remarkably accomplished, namely, That the *Heathen* should be given unto Christ for his *Inheritance*, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for his Possession; That the *Isles* should wait for his Law; and that he should be the Confidence of the Ends of the Earth, and of them that are afar off upon the Sea. Yea, when this and other Nations were involved in Popish Darkness, God left not himself without a Witness in this Land; our ancient Records bear, that in the darkest Times of Popery, the Lord had some Witnesses for himself amongst us, against the Errors and Idolatry of Rome: And when the Lord, by a bright and clear Sun-shine of the Gospel in several Parts of *Europe*, discovered that *Mystery of Iniquity*, *Babylon the great*, the *Mother of Harlots*, and *Abominations of the Earth*; He was also graciously pleased, with an high Hand, and an outstretched Arm, to ransom this Land from the Bondage of Popish Tyranny, Idolatry and Superstition, and again to bless it with the Light and Liberty of the Gospel. So strong was the Hand of the

the Lord upon a few polished Shafts, chosen and furnished by himself, that in a short Time, in the Midst of the Flames of fiery Persecution, and against the Rage and Fury of Devils and Men, this great Work was so far advanced and effectuate, that, in the Year 1560, the Pope's Authority was abolished in *Scotland*, and the *first Confession of Faith* (directed mainly against the Errors and Abominations of the Church of *Rome*, the great Point upon which the Testimony of the Lord's Witnesses was then stated) was ratified and approved by the Parliament; and, in a few Years thereafter, most Congregations were planted with the Ministry of the Gospel, and did yield Subjection unto the Ordinances of Christ: The Government and Discipline of the Church was established according to the Pattern shown in the Mount, in a due Subordination of Congregational Elderships, Presbyteries and Synods, unto General Assemblies: The *first Book of Discipline*, which contains many excellent Reformation-principles, written with a Simplicity and Plainness peculiar to Reforming Times; together with some other Things that were, in the Judgment of the Compilers of that Book, adapted to the then State and Circumstances of the Church, was approved by the Privy Council of *Scotland* in the foresaid Year 1560. The General Assembly, *Anno* 1562, refused to admit one Mr. *Alexander Gordon* to be Superintendent of *Galloway* till he should subscribe the same†. And the General Assembly *Anno* 1638, in their Act condemning the *five Articles* of *Perth*, refer several Times unto it; from whence it is plain, that it was received and approved by this Church at our Reformation: Afterwards the *second Book* of Discipline, wherein the Form of Government and Discipline in the House of God is more distinctly laid down, was approved and registrate by the General Assembly *Anno* 1581, and appointed to be subscribed by all the Ministers of this Church *Anno* 1590; and all the Pieces of the Reformation then attained

† *Calderwood's Hist.* p. 32.

attained unto, were ratified and approved by the Parliament *Anno* 1592. In grateful Acknowledgment of which rare and singular Mercies, and for their own mutual Strength and Support against the common Enemy, the *National Covenant* having been first subscribed by the King and his Household in the Year 1580, was subscribed by Persons of all Ranks *Anno* 1581, and again by all Ranks of Persons in the Year 1590. This Covenant, relating to the Reformed Religion then professed in *Scotland*, and more particularly expressed in the *Large Confession* of Faith, was sworn with much Chearfulness and Gladness of Heart, the whole Land rejoiced at the Oath of God: And, by this solemn Oath and Covenant, this Kingdom made a *National Surrender* of themselves to the Lord, and bound and obliged both themselves and their Posterity to cleave to the Truths of God, and to the Observation of his Laws, Ordinances and Institutions.

But the above-mentioned Reformation, and the Glory of this Church, was much defac'd, when King *James VI.* desirous to gratify the Prelatical Party in *England*, did, contrary to his most solemn Professions, Declarations and Engagements, by the Advice and Assistance of some covetous Time-serving Churchmen, first introduce a lordly Prelacy into this Church, and afterwards corrupted the Worship, by imposing Popish Ceremonies of the Church of *England*, under the Authority of a pretended General Assembly that met at *Perth Anno* 1618; and his Son King *Charles I.* endeavoured to carry on the same Design, by imposing a Service-book, and a Book of Popish and Prelatick Canons: Which Course of Defection continued for many Years without interruption. Yet, during this Period of grievous Sinning and Backsliding, there were several eminent Men who witnessed against the same; also the Word of the Gospel was countenanced in several Corners of the Land with more than ordinary Power and Success, particularly in several Places of the West of

Scotland Anno 1625, and at the Kirk of *Shotts* in the Year 1630. And, after all, the Lord was graciously pleased to turn back the Captivity of this Church when it was least expected, even when Prelacy appeared to be fenced with all the Strength of Civil Authority, and a great Body of the Ministry couching in Conformity under the Burden of it: Yet he did, in a most surprising and wonderful Manner, cut asunder the Cords of these Plowers who plowed upon the Back of this Church, and revived his own Work thro' the Land, by animating at first a few of his Servants and People, in the Year 1637, to testify more openly and boldly against the Current of the Defection and Apostasy of that Time; and he was pleased to give such remarkable Countenance to their Proceedings, that in the Month of *February* 1638, notwithstanding of many Threats and strong Opposition of Adversaries, they renewed the National Covenant; and the Power of God was present with them in such an eminent Manner, that, within a few Months thereafter, almost the whole Land did cheerfully and joyfully come under the Oath of God. Here there was no Force nor Compulsion from the Civil Powers, all this was done voluntarily and cheerfully in the Face of great Opposition from a threatening and enraged Court. Likewise, in the latter End of the foresaid Year, a free and lawful General Assembly met at *Glasgow*, who deposed all, and excommunicated some of the Prelates; recognized and approved the National Covenant; and Prelacy, with the five Articles of *Perth*, were found and declared to be abjured by it; and several other laudable Acts and Constitutions were made for purging the House of God, and the Advancement of Reformation, as the Acts of that Assembly more fully bear. And tho' the Determinations of this Assembly were much opposed by a Popish and Prelatick Party, yet, thro' the good Hand of the Lord upon his Servants and People, the Reformation, then begun and carried on, was ratified and confirmed by the second Parliament of King

Charles

Charles I. Anno 1640, the last Session of which Parliament was countenanced by the King's Presence Anno 1641, and from this Time till the Year 1650 the Building of the House of God went on prosperously and successfully. During which Period, the following Things deserve particularly to be remembered;

1. The Lord gave Testimony and Witness to his own Work, by a remarkable Down-pouring of his Spirit from on High on the Judicatories and Assemblies of his People for Worship; the Word of the Gospel was powerful and successful, the Pleasure of the Lord did prosper thro' the Land, and a Seed was sown, which the Fury and Rage of Twenty eight Years hot Persecution afterwards could not extirpate.

2. The remarkable Countenance which the Lord gave to the Reforming and Covenanting Church of Scotland, did excite their Neighbours in England and Ireland to join with them in a Solemn Covenant, for maintaining, advancing and carrying on a Work of Reformation in the three Kingdoms. This Covenant, however reproached and reviled, was for the Matter of it just and warrantable, for the Ends necessary and commendable, and for the Time seasonable: The Season when this Covenant was entered into, was the dangerous State of the Church and Kingdom of Scotland, the distressed State of the Church and Kingdom of England, and the deplorable State of the Church and Kingdom of Ireland: The Matter of this Covenant was all the precious Things that are involved in pure Religion and true Liberty, namely, the Preservation of the Reformed Religion in Scotland, in Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline; and the Reformation of Religion according to the Word of God in England and Ireland. In this Covenant every one bound themselves to Personal Reformation, and, in their several Places, Stations and Callings, to endeavour National Reformation; Duties obligatory upon every one antecedently

to this Oath and Covenant: The *End* of this Solemn Covenant was, that they and their Posterity after them might, as Brethren, live in Faith and Love, that the Lord might be one, and his Name one, thro' the Three Kingdoms. And, as an eminent Divine* expressed himself before the *House of Commons* in *England*, when they were about to swear the said Covenant, " This Oath (saith he) is such, in the " Matter and Consequences of it, as I can truly say " it is worthy of us, yea, of all these Kingdoms, yea, " of all the Kingdoms in the World; for it is a " swearing Fealty and Allegiance unto Christ the " King of Kings, and a giving up of all these King- " doms, which are his Inheritance, to be subdued " more unto his Throne, and ruled more by his " Sceptre, upon whose Shoulders the Government is " laid." This Oath and Covenant was appointed to be sworn by Persons of all Ranks in *England* and *Ireland*, and was entred into by the whole Body of this Land: And, when it was approved by the General Assembly of this Church, *Anno* 1643: they express themselves in this Manner, " That they all " with one Voice approve of the same, with these " Feelings of Joy which they did find in so great " a Measure at the Renewing of the National Co- " venant of this Kirk and Kingdom."

3. In Prosecution of the above Covenanted Uniformity, a *Confession of Faith* was agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at *Westminster*, with Commissioners from the Church of *Scotland*; likewise the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms*, the *Propositions* concerning Church-government, and the Ordination of Ministers, and the *Directory* for Worship, all agreed upon by the foresaid Assembly at *Westminster*, were received and approved by this Church, in the Manner expressed in the several Acts of Assembly relative unto them; to all which the General Assembly of this Church reckoned this Land bound and obliged by the

* Mr. Philip Nay,

the *Solemn League and Covenant*, as their said Acts more fully bear.

4. When the much desired and covenanted *Uniformity* had proceeded thus far, many in this Land involved themselves in the Breach of Covenant, by the War with *England* commonly called the *Duke's Engagement*, which was testified against, and condemned by the General Assemblies of this Church; and the Sinfulness thereof was afterwards acknowledged by all Ranks of Persons, when the *Solemn League and Covenant* was renewed in *Scotland*, Anno 1648, with a solemn Acknowledgment of Sins and Breaches thereof, and Engagement to the Duties therein-contained. In the said Engagement to the Duties of the Covenant, they bind and oblige themselves to *preserve the Purity of Religion against all Error, Heresy and Schism, and to study and endeavour the carrying on the Work of Uniformity*: Whereby the above-mentioned Uniformity in one Confession of Faith, one Form of Church-government and Directory for Worship, is solemnly approven and sworn unto. And, by the foresaid Renovation of the *Solemn League and Covenant*, this Land declared they look'd upon this Oath as *Nationally* binding upon them, whatever the Behaviour of their Neighbours in *England* or *Ireland* might be. And as the General Assembly, in their *Brotherly Exhortation* to their Brethren in *England*, August 6th 1649, express themselves, " Altho' (*say they*) there were
 " none in the one Kingdom who did adhere to the
 " Covenant, yet thereby were not the other King-
 " doms nor any Person in either of them, absolved
 " from the Bond thereof; since in it we have not
 " only sworn by the Lord, but also covenanted
 " with him. It is not the Failing of one or more
 " that can absolve others from their Duty or Tie
 " to him: Besides, the Duties therein-contained be-
 " ing in themselves lawful, and the Grounds of our
 " Tie thereunto moral; tho' others do forget their
 " Duty, yet doth not their Defection free us from
 " that

“ that Obligation which lies upon us by the Cove-
 “ nant in our Places and Stations. And the Cove-
 “ nant being intended and entered into by these King-
 “ doms, as one of the best Means of Stedfastness
 “ for guarding against declining Times, it were
 “ strange to say that the Backsliding of any should
 “ absolve others from the Tie thereof; especially
 “ seeing our Engagement therein, is not only Na-
 “ tional, but Personal; every one with uplifted Hands
 “ swearing for himself, as is evident by the Tenor
 “ of the Covenant.”

5. During this Period, the Estates of the Nation
 also gave their Helping-hand to the Work of Re-
 formation, not only by the legal Establishment given
 unto it in the foresaid Year 1640, but also by ap-
 proving the Solemn League and Covenant *Anno* 1644,
 and by many laudable Acts of Parliament pass'd *Anno*
 1649; particularly by the Act abolishing Patronages,
 a Grievance and Yoke under which this Church had
 groin'd ever since the Reformation from Popery; and
 by their Act *for keeping the Judicatories and Places*
of Trust free of Corruption; and by the *Act of Classes*
 for purging the Army of Persons disaffected to the
 Cause and Work of Reformation. Also, by another
 Act pass'd in the foresaid Year 1649, they ordained
 and declared, “ That before the King's Majesty
 “ who now is, or any of his Successors, shall be ad-
 “ mitted to the Exercise of his Royal Power, he
 “ shall assure and declare, by his solemn Oath under
 “ his Hand and Seal, his Allowance of the National
 “ Covenant, and of the Solemn League and Co-
 “ venant, and his Obligation to prosecute the
 “ Ends thereof, in his Station and Calling; and that
 “ he shall, for himself and his Successors, consent
 “ and agree to the Acts of Parliament enjoining the
 “ Solemn League and Covenant, and fully establish-
 “ ing Presbyterian Government, the Directory of
 “ Worship, Confession of Faith and Catechisms, as
 “ they are approved by the General Assembly of
 “ this Kirk, and Parliament of this Kingdom, in all
 “ his

“ his Majesty's Dominions; and that he shall observe
 “ these in his Practice and Family; and that he shall
 “ never make Opposition to any of these, or endeavour
 “ your any Change thereof.” In Pursuance of this
 Act of Parliament, King *Charles II.* having, by his
 solemn Oath, declared his Approbation of the National
 Covenant, and of the Solemn League and Covenant,
 and obliged himself to prosecute the Ends thereof,
 was *crown'd* with great Solemnity at *Scone*
 upon the 1st *January* 1650.

The above Particulars are some Instances of the
 Power and Goodness of the most High God, manifested
 in the Beginning and Progress of the Work of Reforma-
 tion in this Land, which *this Presbytery* judge it their
 Duty to record and bear Witness unto: For, as the Arm
 of the Lord was gloriously revealed in recovering this
 Church and Nation from Antichristian Darkness, and
 bringing all Ranks of Persons within the Bond of a
 National Oath and Covenant to be the Lord's; So, when,
 by a surprising and wonderful Appearance of Divine
 Providence, this Church was delivered from the Brink
 of Ruin in the Year 1638, the Judicatories of the
 Church pulled down and carried off the Rubbish of
 Defection; they began where former Reformation
 had stopt, and went forward in building and beautify-
 ing the House of God.

But, since the Church, while militant, is in an im-
 perfect State, it is not hereby intended to affirm,
 That, under the above-mentioned Period, there was
 nothing defective or wanting as to the Beauty and
 Order of the House of God, or that there was no-
 thing culpable in the Administration; All that is
 designed by the above particular Deduction is, to
 declare, that this Church endeavoured, and merci-
 fully attained, a considerable Pitch of Reformation,
 during the foresaid Period: Towards this their seve-
 ral Contendings and Wrestrings, their solemn Vows
 and Engagements, their Declarations and Testimo-
 nies, all pointed. It would have been the Hap-
 piness and Glory of this Church, if she had held
 fast

fast what by the good Hand of God upon her, and by a Series and Train of remarkable Providences both of Mercy and Judgment, she had attained unto; But how soon did *her Gold become dim*; How quickly was *her most fine Gold changed*? Ah! how was her Glory eclipsed, and her Beauty suddenly departed from her? A glorious Building was pull'd down; a Reformation, ratified, confirmed and established in the strongest Terms by Law, and fenced by the most solemn Oaths and Covenants, sworn with uplifted Hands by our King, by our Noblemen, Barons, Ministers, Burgessees and Commons of all Sorts, was, not only sullied, but overturned, and that by these very Hands that had been lifted up to Heaven for the Preservation and Maintenance of the same. Hath a Nation changed their gods, which yet are no gods? but *Scotland* hath changed her Glory for that which doth not profit! May it not be said, *Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this, be horribly afraid; for my People have committed two Evils, they have forsaken me the Fountain of living Waters, and have hewn out to themselves Cisterns, broken Cisterns that can hold no Water?* Can there be a Parallel given in any Church or Land, of that Scene that opened of Backsliding and Defection; of Perjury and Apostasy, or of that Oppression and Cruelty, afterwards exercised upon such as adhered unto the Cause and Covenant of their God, after so many and so great Appearances of the Lord in a Way of Mercy amongst us, and after such solemn Professions of Subjection and Obedience unto him.

The *Presbytery* pretended not to reckon up the innumerable Abominations of the Land; but they judged it their Duty to give some particular Instances of the Beginning, Progress and Hight of the Apostasy and Defection from the above-mentioned Steps of Reformation, in which all Ranks of Persons have sinfully and shamefully involved themselves.

I. When

I. When the Judicatories of the Church were carrying on the Work of Reformation with a beautiful and pleasant Harmony, a Snare was laid for breaking and dividing them; when, in the Month of *December* 1650, and in the Beginning of 1651, two several Questions were put unto the Commission of the General Assembly by the King and Parliament, concerning the Admission into Places of publick Trust, both Civil and Military, of such as were debarred from the same by the above-mentioned Acts of Parliament *Anno* 1649. The *Resolutions* of the Commission upon the said Question were such, as the King and Parliament took Occasion from them to repeal the foresaid laudable Acts; and all Places of publick Trust, Civil and Military, were immediately fill'd with such, whose Disaffection to the Work of Reformation, carried on from the Year 1638, was abundantly notour; Malignants in Principle, and such as were immoral in Practice, were promoted; a sham Profession of Repentance was required at first from such as had been active against the Work of Reformation, but even this was soon laid aside; and when the Resolutions of the Commission were remonstrated against by some Presbyteries and several Ministers, the Commission discharged all Ministers or Probationers to speak or write against them: And what was done by the Commission, was approved by some ensuing Assemblies, who also excluded all, both Ministers and Elders, who remonstrated against the *publick Resolutions*, from sitting in General Assemblies; and appointed Presbyteries to oblige both Intrants into the Ministry before they were admitted to Trials for Ordination, and Elders before they were allowed to sit in Presbytery, to give it under their Hand, that they pass'd from any Protestation or Declinature against the said Assemblies; and likewise some eminent Ministers were suspended and deposed, for testifying against the foresaid Resolutions. But the Constitution and Actings of these Assemblies having been

protested against by a considerable Body of Ministers and Elders, who were grieved at the foresaid Resolutions of the Commission, all such were designed *Protesters*, as these on the other Side were called *Publick Resolutioners*. By the above Proceedings, the Nation (with the Consent of the Church) delivered up, not only the Maintenance and Preservation of their valuable Civil Liberties; but also of all the Civil Securities and Ratifications given unto the Work of Reformation from the Year 1638, into the Hands of such who had appeared for the Support and Maintenance of arbitrary Power and Authority in the State, and who were notour Enemies of a Covenanted Reformation. As the foresaid Resolutions, both of Church and State, were contrary to, and condemned by the Word of God, *Exod.* 18. 21. *2 Chron.* 19. 3. *Psal.* 106. 35. *Psal.* 139. 21. *Hos.* 5. 13. so their Sin and Guilt in this Matter was the more hainous, and the more highly aggravated, in regard it was what had been so lately acknowledged, and so solemnly engaged against, in the solemn Acknowledgement of Sins, and Engagement to Duties. The Sinfulness of these Proceedings was witnessed against by a considerable Number of eminent Ministers and godly Elders thro' the Land, who laid open the dangerous Tendency of them: And what they had too just Gound to fear, came in a short Time to pass; These Men, who were now admitted into Places of publick Trust, had an active Hand in overthrowing the beautiful Constitution of this Church, and in bringing the Nation under the Yoke of arbitrary Government. And it cannot well escape to be taken notice of, that the most Part of these who were for the *publick Resolutions*, made Defection into Prelacy; whereas all the *Protesters*, except a few, stood firm against it; when, in the Year 1662, this *curst Jericho* was rebuilt, and some of the *former* who were honest in the Main, but carried in to the Measures of the Court, came with Regrete to see their Error and Mistake, and to acknowledge,

ledge, † *That their Brethren the PROTESTERS had their Eyes opened, when they were blind.*

When this Church and Land was thus miserably rent and broken (as a just Punishment of this Step of Declining and Treachery in the Cause and Covenant of the Lord) the Nation was brought under the Yoke of *Oliver Cromwell the Usurper*, under which it gron'd for the Space of ten Years. During this Period, a most sinful *Toleration* of Sectarian Errors and Delusions was granted by *Cromwell* and his Privy-council in *Scotland*: This was the first of this Kind known among us since the Reformation; and thereby such Laxness in Principle and Practice was introduced, as pav'd a Way for the more general Apostasy and Defection, which followed very soon thereafter. The aforesaid *Toleration* was faithfully witnessed against by some *Ministers* in the Provinces of *Perth* and *Fife* (in their Testimony published *Anno 1659*) as contrary to the Word of God, our Confession of Faith and Larger Catechism, and as contrary to, and inconsistent with, the Solemn Oath and Covenant of God sworn by the Nation; and likewise, as producing many dismal and sinful Effects, such as the Increase and Growth of Errors and Blasphemy, with Laxness and Profaneness in Practice; and also as a Temptation to Men to break the Lord's Bonds asunder, and to cast his Cords from off them.

II. After the Death of *Oliver Cromwell the Usurper*, and when the Power of the Sectarian Party, who had ruled the Three Kingdoms for several Years, began to decline, the Parliament of *England* restored King *Charles II.* to the Government, without any Conditions or Limitations; whereby all the Testimonies and Declarations they had given for a Covenanted Reformation and Uniformity, were at once given up: And immediately, abjured Prelacy, with the Service-book and all the Ceremonies, were re-imposed in *England*; a dismal Presage of what was

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† *Woodrow's Hist.* Vol. 1. p. 112;

now coming on *Scotland*, where, until a Meeting of Parliament, the Government was lodged in the Hands of a *Committee of Estates* named by the last Parliament *Anno 1651*. This Committee, consisting of such as were disaffected to the Work of Reformation, caused seize and imprison a few eminent Ministers, who met about an Address to the King upon his Return, and with the Faithfulness that became their Office, putting him in Mind of his own, and the Nations Solemn Covenant-Engagements to the Lord. Upon which Occasion a Proclamation was immediately emitted, discharging all Meetings without the King's Authority, and all the above and like Petitions and Remonstrances whatsoever, under a Pretext of their being seditious: This was a Prelude unto the dismal Scene that was now opening.

III. When the Parliament met in *Scotland Anno 1661*, they immediately remove all the legal Securities given to our Church-Constitution, and the whole Work of Reformation, by rescinding all Acts of Parliament from the Year 1640 to 1651 *inclusive*, and declaring all the said Parliaments null and void; They assert the *King's Supremacy* in all Causes, and declare all Meetings, Assemblies, Leagues and Covenants, without the King's Countenance and Authority, unlawful and unwarrantable; They discharge the renewing of the *League and Covenant*, or any other publick Oath and Covenant concerning the Government of the Church, without the King's Warrant: And, having thus removed all the legal Fences from our Church-Constitution, they give up the Government of the Church to be settled by the King, in the Way *He* judges most agreeable to the Word of God and Monarchical Government.

IV. At the second Session of this Parliament, *Anno 1662*, it is declared, That the Ordering and Disposall of the external Government and Policy of the Church doth properly belong to the King, as an inherent Right of the Crown, by virtue of his
 Royal

Royal Prerogative and Supremacy in Causes Ecclesiastick: All Acts of Parliament or Council, which might be interpreted to give any Church-power, Jurisdiction or Government to the Office-bearers of the Church and their Meetings, than that which acknowledged a Dependence upon, and Subordination to the sovereign Power of the King as Supreme, are rescinded, 'cassated and annulled; *Diocesan* Bishops are restored to their Dignities, Privileges and Jurisdctions; all Meetings of Presbyteries and Sessions, not authorised by the Bishop, are discharged. In their second Act, all that was done in Prosecution of a Covenanted Reformation, from 1638 to 1650, is declared rebellious and treasonable; the *National* Covenant as sworn in the Year 1638, and the Solemn League and Covenant, are declared to be unlawful Oaths, and imposed contrary to the Fundamental Laws of the Kingdom: And likewise, in the said Act, a *dispensing* Power is assumed, declaring the Consciences of all these who had taken the foresaid Oaths free from the Obligation of them. It is also declared rebellious and treasonable in Subjects, upon Pretence of Reformation, or any other Pretence whatever, to enter into Leagues and Covenants, or to take up Arms against the King; whereby the sinful and absurd Doctrines of *Passive Obedience* and *Non-resistance*, condemned by the memorable *Revolution Anno* 1688, were screwed up to the highest: As likewise, they annul all *Ecclesiastical* Acts and Constitutions approving the *National* Covenant, or the Solemn League and Covenant; and particularly they declared, That the Assembly that met at *Glasgow Anno* 1638; was in itself an unlawful and seditious Meeting; and that their Acts, Deeds and Sentences were in all Time coming to be reputed unlawful, void and null. Afterwards, by an Act of Council at *Glasgow*, about three hundred Ministers are, without any legal Procedure, thrust from their Charges, merely for Non-conformity, and refusing Subjection to the Prelates; and, in the Year 1663, the Parliament ordain and enact,

act, That all Non-conforming Ministers, that shall presume to exercise their Ministry, shall be punished as seditious Persons: And also, in Acknowledgment of, and hearty Compliance with his Majesty's Government Ecclesiastick and Civil, all the Subjects are required to give their Concurrence and Countenance to these who are by publick Authority admitted to their severall Parishes (namely, Prelatick Incumbents) and to attend their Meetings for Worship under the Penalties mentioned in the Act of Parliament; and also, for putting all these tyrannical Laws and others that were enacted in this Period in Execution, an *High Commission* Court was erected, most irregular and arbitrary, both for its Constitution and Manner of Procedure. During this Period of Apostasy, *viz.* from the Year 1660 to 1688, there is a continued Series and Train of Acts of Parliament, supporting the Prelates and maintaining Prelacy, and obliging the whole Land to Conformity, and to homologate the King's Supremacy. Thus abjured Prelacy is restored; and not only is the Royal Prerogative screwed up to a most exorbitant Height in Matters merely Civil, but an Authority is put into the Hands of the King, like to that which is usurped by the *Roman* Antichrist. The Lord Jesus, on whose Shoulders the Government of his own House is laid, and who alone is able and worthy to bear this Weight and Burden (*Psalms* 2. throughout. *Isa.* 9. 6, 7. *Eph.* 1. 22, 23.) is, as far as human Laws could do it, divested of his Prerogative Royal, namely his incommunicable *Headship*, Sovereignty and Authority over the Church, his spiritual Kingdom; and all this done by the Representatives of the Nation, in Opposition and Contradiction to the most solemn Professions of Allegiance unto the King of *Zion*, and the most solemn Oaths and Covenants that a People could come under to the most high God. Yea, to such an Height of Heaven-daring Impiety and Wickedness did they arrive, that, in the Year 1663, the National Covenant as it was sworn in the Year 1638, and the Solemn

solemn League and Covenant, together with that remarkable Paper, intituled, *The Causes of the Lord's Wrath*, were most ignominiously burnt at the Cross of *Linlithgow* by the Authority of the Magistrates there. And afterwards (*January 14 1682*) the *Solemn League and Covenant* is condemned by the *Duke of York* then Commissioner, and the Privy-council, to be most contemptuously burnt at the Cross of *Edinburgh* by the Hands of the common Hangman; which was accordingly done, to the publick affronting and dishonouring of the great God to whom these solemn Vows were made. It was also declared by Act of Parliament (*May 6th 1685*) That the giving or taking of the *National Covenant* as explained in the Year 1638, or of the *League and Covenant*, or writing in Defence thereof, or owning them as lawful or obligatory upon themselves or others, shall infer the Crime and Pains of *Treason*. Can a Parallel be given to such Perfidy and Treachery, to such Apostasy and Defection? What Nation once like *Scotland* for a zealous Profession of Obedience and Subjection to the Prince of the Kings of the Earth! but now scarce to be equalled for Treachery and Apostasy, attended at the same Time with a Flood of Profaneness and Immorality overflowing the whole Land.

V. In this Hour and Power of Darkness, an universal silent *Submission* is given at first to the above wicked tyrannical Acts and Constitutions; no open, *judicial* or *joint Testimony* was lifted up against them. When the Storm was ready to break, Ten Ministers and two Elders met together (a small Number in Comparison of what might have been expected in such a Day of Perplexity and Distress) in order to present a Supplication to the King, for his employing his Royal Power and Authority in the Preservation and Maintenance of the true Protestant Reformed Religion in the Three Kingdoms, according to the *National Covenant*, and the *Solemn League and Covenant*, both which he had solemnly sworn at his *Coronation* in *Scotland*: But they were, without all
Law

Law and Justice, immediately apprehended and incarcerated, for no other Reason, but because they were framing such a Supplication; and (as has been already observed) all such Meetings, Petitions and Remonstrances of publick Grievances, were discharged as seditious. This struck such a Terror on the most Part, that no joint Remonstrance or Testimony was offered; and when some *Provincial Synods* in the Year 1661, when the Parliament had begun to raze the Work of Reformation, were considering what was proper for them to do in this Juncture, they were dissolved, in the King's Name, by such Noblemen or Gentlemen as the *Commissioner* to the Parliament had appointed to observe their Proceedings. All of them immediately obeyed; some of them dismissed even without Prayer. The Synod of *Galloway* protested against their Dissolution, but yet they rose immediately. The Synod of *Glasgow*, at their ordinary Meeting in *April*, adjourned themselves till *May*, then to consider of a Supplication to the Parliament for the Security of Religion; but, when they were about to convene, they were discharged in a Proclamation from the Cross by Order from the King's Commissioner, to which they gave Obedience? And likewise, when, in the Beginning of the Year 1662, all Synodical and Presbyterial Meetings, until authorised by the Bishops, were discharged; Presbyteries, as well as Synods, were immediately deserted. Such Fainting in the Cause of God, in this Day of Apostasy and Backsliding, was a Sign and Evidence of the Lord's Indignation and Wrath, and was far from that Courage and Resolution that sometimes appeared among the Ministers of this Church, who witnessed against the like Incroachments upon the Liberties and Privileges of the House of God, in Face of the greatest Opposition. In like manner, in Obedience to the Act of Council at *Glasgow*, the most Part of these that conformed not to Prelacy left their Flocks, whereby they became a Prey to the grievous *Wolves* that were afterward thrust in upon them; yea, the
greatest

greatest Part by far thro' the whole Land gave Obedience to the above-mentioned Act of Parliament, requiring them to attend upon Worship performed by the *Bishops Underlings*, or such as conformed to Prelacy, in Testimony of their Acknowledgment of, and hearty Compliance with, his Majesty's Government Ecclesiastick and Civil; by which Means all Ranks of Persons, from the highest to the lowest, were involved in the Apostasy and Defection, and guilty of the grossest Treachery in the Cause and Covenant of the Lord; And, for all the above-mentioned and the like Sins, awful Judgements are threatened in the Word of God, *Lev. 26. 16, 17, 25. Deut. 25. 23, 24, 25. Psal. 78. 9, 10. Isa. 24. 5, 6. Jer. 11. 9, 10. Hos. 8. 1. Rev. 2. 5.*

VI. When the Ministers, who by the Proceedings of the Parliament and Council *Anno 1662* were cast out of their Churches, had recovered from the Consternation and Damp which such a sudden Convulsion in Church and State had brought upon them, they began to be perswaded, that it was their Duty, notwithstanding of their tyrannical Ejection, to preach the Gospel of Christ: And the People being more and more alienated from the *Bishops Creatures*, or *Curates*, as they were called, many of them being not only ignorant and profane, but all of them being guilty of Perjury and Defection, in receiving a Commission immediately from, and acting in Subordination unto, and by a Power derived from the abjured Prelates, contrary to the Word of God and our Reformation-principles, confirmed by solemn Oaths and Covenants; and being also sensible of the Obligation still lying upon them to own their ejected Ministers as faithful Servants of Christ, and of their Duty to receive the Ordinances of Christ as dispensed by them; Therefore not a few of the said Ministers, considering the present urgent Necessity of the People, and their cheerful Readiness and Willingness to hear the Word of God, saw themselves called of the Lord to preach the Gospel, wherever Providence

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ordered their Abode; they began at first to preach in private Houses: This enraged the Prelates, who ceased not to stir up the Rulers to all Extravagancies of Cruelty, for suppressing these peaceable and harmless Assemblies for the Worship of God: Hence the Parliament declared all such Meetings, or *Conventicles*, as they were called, to be seditious and criminal, and discharged them under the severest Penalties. After this, Houses were forced when People were assembled for hearing the Word of God; many were haled to Prison, and the Laws execute with Rigour against them. These Severities constrained them at last to keep their Meetings in the *Fields*; whereupon the Rage and Fury of the Rulers, instigate by the apostate Prelates, did break forth into a more extensive and boundless Flame; several Acts of Parliament and Council were emitted, and all Ways of Cruelty imaginable taken, to suppress Meetings in Houses and in the Fields, Field-meetings being discharged under Pain of Death to the Minister, and grievous Penalties upon such as did attend them: Hence ensued a Train of the greatest Barbarities, wherewith these two persecuting Reigns were indelibly stained, as the Effect of tyrannical Acts, and the more tyrannical Execution of them. But, notwithstanding of these Severities, the more the Lord's People were afflicted, the more they grew; when the Gospel was dispensed at the Peril of their Lives from the Sword in the Wilderness, the Lord gave remarkable Countenance to his own Ordinance, which were blessed to the Conversion and Confirmation of many.

VII. When the Rulers at this Time saw that they could not by all the above Acts of Cruelty extirpate the Assemblies of the Lord's People for Worship, according to his own Institution, and which were the only Monuments of his Covenanted Interest in the Land; but the more they laboured to suppress them, the more frequent they grew: Then the cunning and crafty Device of an *Indulgence* to some of the *outed* Ministers

Ministers is fallen upon, whereby many, otherwise eminent Lights, were ensnared and taken. This *Indulgence* was first granted by the King, in his Letter to the *Privy Council*, dated *June 7th 1660*, whereby he authoriseth them to appoint so many of the *outed Ministers*, who had lived *peaceably and orderly*, to return to preach and exercise the Functions of the Ministry in the Parish-Churches where they *formerly* served, providing they be vacant; and that Patrons should present to other Churches such others of them as the Council shall approve. The Ministers allowed by this Letter to exercise their Ministry, were appointed to keep Presbyteries and Synods, namely, such as depended upon, and were authorised by the Bishops; and, in case they did not, they were to be confined within the Bounds of the Parishes where they were allowed to preach. Also the Letter requires, That they be strictly enjoined not to admit any from neighbouring Parishes to the Communion, nor to baptise their Children, nor to marry any of them, without the Allowance of the Curate of the Parish; and that they should not give Countenance to any who deserted their own Parish-Churches, and resorted to their Preachings; and that no seditious Discourse or Expression be uttered in the Pulpit, or elsewhere, by any of these Ministers.

In Pursuance of the above Letter, the *Privy Council*, at different Times, appoint several Ministers to preach and exercise the other Functions of the Ministry, some at the Churches out of which they had been ejected, others (their own Churches being planted with Intruders) were appointed, with Consent of the Patron, to Churches that were vacant: And every one of these Ministers were by the *Council's Act* (*July 27th 1669*) strictly enjoined to give due Obedience to all the Restrictions contained in the King's Letter aforesaid. After the granting of this *Indulgence*, the King's *Supremacy*, which was indeed the Spring thereof, and had been amply asserted by former Acts of Parliament, is now further explained

and extended by the Parliament that met *October* 19th that same Year; for, by the first Act of that Session of Parliament, It is enacted, asserted and declared, “ That the King and his Successors have the supreme
 “ Authority and Supremacy over all Persons, and in
 “ all Causes Ecclesiastick within this Kingdom; and
 “ that, by virtue thereof, the ordering and disposing
 “ of the external Government and Policy of the
 “ Church, doth properly belong to them as an *in-*
 “ *herent Right* to the Crown; and that they may
 “ settle, enact and emit such Constitutions, Acts and
 “ Orders concerning the Administration of the ex-
 “ ternal Government of the Church, and the Persons
 “ employed in the same, and concerning all Eccle-
 “ siastical Meetings and Matters to be proposed and
 “ determined therein, as they in their Royal Wis-
 “ dom shall think fit.” After this, several Restri-
 ctions were laid upon the *Indulged* by the Privy
 Council; particularly by their Act, *January* 13th
 1670, they discharge them to *lecture* upon any Part
 of Scripture before Sermon; with Certification, that,
 if they continue to do so, they shall be discharged
 to exercise their Ministry within the Kingdom.
 Afterwards a *second Indulgence* is granted by the Pri-
 vy Council, *September* 3d 1672; and three several
 Acts were fram’d about it that same Day: By the
 first, a great many of the *outed* Ministers, not formerly
 indulged, are classed and confined by two’s and three’s
 in different Parishes, and discharged to pass without
 the Bounds of the same; and a Committee of Council
 is impow’red to remove any of the Ministers named,
 from one of the said Parishes to which they are con-
 fined, to another, as they shall see Cause, within six
 Months after the above Date, of this Act. By a
 second Act of the same Date, there are several other
 Limitations laid upon them as to the Exercise of
 their Ministry, besides these mentioned in the King’s
 Letter; such as, “ That the *Indulged*, in one and the
 “ same Diocese, celebrate the Communion in one
 “ and the same Day; That they should not preach
 “ in

“ in Church-yards, or any other Place, but in Kirks;
 “ under the Pain of being punished as Keepers of
 “ Conventicles; and that they depart not forth from
 “ the Parish, without Licence from the Bishop of
 “ the Diocese only; and that, in the Exercise of Dis-
 “ cipline, all Causes, formerly referable to Presby-
 “ teries, should still in the same Manner be referred
 “ unto them, altho’ they were now nothing else but
 “ Bishops Courts.” And, by a third Act of the a-
 bove Date, they discharge all other Presbyterian
 Ministers, except these who are *indulged*, to exercise
 any Part of their Ministerial Work, unless they are
 invited by the Ministers of the Parishes where they
 live; and appoint them under severe Penalties to at-
 tend Ordinances in the said Parishes. Thus the In-
 dulgence stood *Anno* 1672, and some Years after-
 wards, when by a publick Proclamation (*March* 1st
 1676) the above Orders and Instructions were again
 strictly enjoined; they are in the said Proclamation
 expressly called, the *Terms* upon which the *indulged*
 Ministers were *permitted* to preach, and exercise the
 other Functions of the Ministry. And, by an Act
 of Council of the same Date with the said Procla-
 mation, “ The *indulged* Ministers are *discharged* to
 “ admit any of the Ministers *not indulged* to their
 “ *Communions* or *Pulpits*, under Pain of being de-
 “ posed by the Bishop of the Diocese.”

From all which it is evident, that the *Indulgences*
 above-mentioned had their Rise, Conveyance and
 Subsistence from the *blasphemous Supremacy* usurped
 over the House of God; and the several Acts above-
 mentioned were the actual Exercise of the same: As
 will plainly appear, if it is considered, that the Mi-
 nisterial Power and Authority for the Government
 of the Church, which the Lord Jesus Christ, the
 alone Head and Lawgiver thereof, has conveyed to
 Church-officers as the proper Subject and Receptacle
 thereof (*Mat.* 16. 19. *Chap.* 18. 18, 20. *2 Cor.* 10.
 8, 11.) is, by the *Act of Supremacy*, most impiously
 and sacrilegiously transferred upon the *King* and his
 Successors,

Successors, as an inherent Right to the Crown; with Power to him either to exercise the same in his own Person, or by others whom he shall nominate and appoint to execute his Orders. Accordingly, in Obedience to the Commands, and by virtue of an Authority derived from the King (whom the Parliament had constitute supreme over all Persons, and in all Causes Ecclesiastick) the *Privy Council* assume the *actual Exercise of Church-power*, in judging of the Gifts and Qualifications of Ministers for labouring in such and such Parishes, and planting and transplanting them at their Pleasure, and in framing and prescribing Ecclesiastical Canons and Instructions for regulating the Exercise of the Ministerial Office; all which are *Acts competent only to Church-officers* by virtue of Christ's Institution, and quite beyond the Sphere of the *Civil Magistrate*. And, as a further Evidence that the *Indulgence* flowed from the *Supremacy* as the *Spring* thereof, the Ministers, who had the Benefit of it, were appointed to such and such Parishes (with Consent of the Patron) in virtue of the *King's supreme Authority exercised by the Council*, without any Call from the People, or the Interposure of any Ecclesiastick Authority whatsoever: And these who were restored to their own Churches, were not admitted to them by virtue of any *former standing Relation*, but merely by *Appointment of the Council, in Pursuance of his Majesty's Commands signified to them*; as is evident from the Tenor of the several Acts relative to this Affair. And, tho' all the Ministers of Christ have their Instructions from Him alone, and are expressly enjoined to *teach the Observance of all Things whatsoever* he has commanded them, *Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20.* every one of the *indulged Ministers* were *restricted* in the Exercise of their Ministry by the above-mentioned *Limitations*; and, as they were strictly discharged to utter any *seditions Expressions* in the Pulpit, or elsewhere, so it is plain, from the Acts of Parliament and Council at this Time, that *faithful Ministerial Freedom* against the *Perfidy and Treachery*

Treachery of all Ranks of Persons, in the present horrid Violation of the Oath and Covenant of God, and in rearing up, or submitting unto the abjured Hierarchy and wicked Supremacy, was what was then reckoned *seditions*. And, tho' it may be alledged that the Ministry of some of the Indulged was attended with Success, and that the Instructions given them were not punctually observed by them all; yet the *Acceptance* of the *Indulgence* in the above complex Circumstances, and *omitting* to give a plain and distinct *Testimony*, in that Case of Confession, against that wicked *Supremacy* usurped over the House of God, was a *Departing* from a very material Part of the Cause and Testimony of the Church of *Scotland*. And it was no small Aggravation of the Sinfulness of this Step, that some Ministers, who were in the Council's Nomination, *never accepted* of it, but continued with others of their Brethren who were not included in it (notwithstanding of cruel Edicts against them) to *jeopard* their Lives in the *high Places* of the *Field*, testifying and witnessing against the present Apostasy and Defection from *Scotland's* Covenanted Reformation.

VIII. The whole Land was yet further involved in dreadful and hainous Guilt, by the many sinful *Oaths*, *Declarations* and *Bonds* that were imposed during this Period of Apostasy and Defection, between the Year 1660 and 1688; particularly, by the 11th Act of the 1st Session of Parliament *Anno* 1661, all Persons in publick Trust were obliged to swear the Oath of *Allegiance*, or rather *Supremacy*; whereby they were required to declare, *That the King is the only supreme Governor over all Persons and in all Causes*, and that they should promote and support his foresaid *Jurisdiction* against all deadly. Together with this Oath an *Instrument assertory* of the Royal Prerogative is appointed to be signed, whereby the Subscribers consented to the King's *absolute Power*, and owned the Unlawfulness of *resisting* him upon any Pretext whatsoever; and so not only gave
up

up their *Civil Liberties*, but materially renounced the whole Work of Reformation, as it was *begun* at our *Secession* from *Popery*, and as it was *carried on* in the Year 1638, tho' all was approv'd by King and Parliament, and, which is more, was signally own'd of God. The *Privy Council*, or any having Authority from them, were impow'ed to impose the said Oath and assertory Act upon any whom they pleas'd; hence, in a short Time, these *Oaths* reach'd the most Part of the Subjects, and became trying Badges of Loyalty. If a Person was sifted before the Council or other Courts, if he swore the Allegiance and sign'd the assertory Act, he was dismiss'd; but, if he refus'd, there was no Mercy for him. Again, by the 5th Act of the 2d Session of that same Parliament (*Anno* 1662) in order to put the Grave-stone upon the Covenanted Reformation, a *Declaration* is appointed to be sign'd by all Persons in publick Trust, wherein they were required to *affirm and declare*, "That it is unlawful, upon any Pre-
 " text whatsoever, to enter into Leagues and Cove-
 " nants, or to take up Arms against the King, or
 " these commission'd by him; That all the Convo-
 " cations, Petitions and Protestations, that were
 " used in the Beginning, and for carrying on the
 " late Troubles" (*i. e.* all that was done for carry-
 " ing on the Work of Reformation from the Year
 " 1638) " were unlawful and seditious; and that the
 " *National Covenant*, as explained in the Year 1638,
 " and the *Solemn League and Covenant*, were in
 " themselves unlawful *Oaths*; and that there lieth
 " no Obligation upon any of the Subjects, from the
 " said *Oaths*, to endeavour any Change or Altera-
 " tion in the Government, either in Church or State,
 " from the present Establishment by the Laws of
 " the Kingdom." This *Declaration* became one of
 the great Sins and Snares of this Time; *Perjury* is
 now made a chief Qualification, and necessary Con-
 dition of all that were to be admitted to Places and
 Offices in Church and State. Likewise, by an Act
 of

of Parliament *Anno* 1670, against People's separating from the publick Worship in their own Parishes, *i. e.* from the perjur'd *Conformists* to Prelacy; Heritors and Liferenters, if they obstinately withdraw from their Parish-Churches for a certain Space of Time, must be sifted before the Council, and required to sign a *Bond*, obliging themselves, That they shall not, upon any Pretext whatsoever, rise in Arms against the King, or any commissioned by him; and that they shall not assist or countenance any who shall rise in Arms; and the Refusers of this Bond are appointed to be secured or banished, and their single or Liferent Escheat to belong to the King: This was a Snare unto many, and a Ground of Suffering unto others. Besides these Oaths imposed by Authority of Parliament, many other ensnaring Oaths and Bonds were also enforced by the Privy Council, such as the *Bond of Peace*, appointed to be subscribed *Anno* 1667; and the *Bond for Regularity*, as it was called, appointed by Act of Council, *August* 2d 1677, to be subscribed by all the Heritors, &c. whereby they bind and oblige themselves, and all under their Authority, That they shall not withdraw from the publick Divine Worship in their respective Parish Churches; that they shall not have their Children baptised, nor be married, but by such Ministers as are lawfully authorised; and that they shall not be present at Conventicles, either in Houses or in the Fields; and all this under heavy and severe Penalties. But that *Oath*, called the *Test*, deserves particular Consideration: It was a *self-contradictory* Oath, and had not a Parallel among all the Oaths ever imposed in any Protestant Country; It was framed by the Parliament *August* 31st 1681; at first only Persons in publick Trust were obliged to take it, but afterwards it became a general *Test of Loyalty*, and was imposed upon all Ranks of Persons, and made a Handle even of persecuting unto Death great Numbers, some of whom were of a very considerable Rank and Quality; and Multi-

tudes, who could not comply with it, were grievously oppressed. In the *first Part* of this *Oath*, the Protestant Religion contained in the *first Confession of Faith* is professed, and all Principles and Doctrines contrary to, and inconsistent with, the same are renounced; and yet, in direct Contradiction thereto, the King's *Supremacy* in the utmost Extent is again and again asserted, together with the Unlawfulness of Subjects their resisting the Sovereign upon any Pretext whatsoever; the Obligation of the Covenants, National and Solemn League, is disowned, and the Government of the Church then established by Law is approved. Thus the Representatives of the Nation, and together with them many of all Ranks of Persons thro' the Land, make themselves more and more vile by the blackest Perjury, the grossest Apostasy and Defection from the Lord, that a People or a Nation could be guilty of.

IX. The Wickedness of this Period did rise higher, even to the greatest *Tyranny* and *Cruelty* exercised upon all such as endeavoured to keep their Garments clean in this sinning and defiling Day. The above-mentioned *Acts* of Parliament, with the *Oaths* and *Bonds* imposed by the Parliament and Privy Council, laid a Foundation for near Twenty eight Years *grievous Persecution*: A simple Non-compliance with the Prelatick Government then established; declining to attend Ordinances dispensed by the Bishop's Underlings; being present at Conventicles in Houses or Fields; refusing the Oath of Supremacy, or the other Oaths and Bonds that were imposed, owning the Obligation of our solemn Covenants, and the Lawfulness of defensive Arms, or of resisting a tyrannical Sovereign; were reckoned *Crimes of the highest Nature*, and subjected Multitudes of all Ranks unto unparallel'd Severity.

During this Period, the *Witnesses* for Scotland's Covenanted Reformation endured cruel Mockings and Scourgings; they wandered about in Deserts and in Mountains, in Caves and Dens of the Earth, destitute, afflicted,

afflicted, tormented. Multitudes were banished their native Country, others suffered long Imprisonment, *spoiling of Goods*, and grievous Tortures, that had not a Parallel in any Protestant Country; many *resisted even unto Blood, striving against Sin*; the most publick Cities of the Nation were defiled with innocent Blood, such as *Edinburgh, Glasgow*, and other Cities yea, to such an Height did Cruelty and Tyranny arrive, that many were killed in the *open Fields* without any legal Process; the merciless Soldiers were both their Judges and Executioners. This *Torrent of Blood* was opened in the Martyrdom of the *noble Marquis of Argyle*, May 27th, and of the *worthy Mr. James Guthrie* five Days thereafter in the Year 1661, when the Parliament was razing *Scotland's* Covenanted Reformation, and planting the *Tree of Prelacy and arbitrary Power*. This *curst Tree* behoved to be soak'd with the noble Blood of an excellent *Patriot*, a *staunch Presbyterian*, a *vigorous Asserter* of *Scotland's* Liberties, and with the Blood of an eminent and faithful Minister of Jesus Christ; and much bitter and bloody Fruit did this *Tree of Prelacy* bear, in the Sufferings unto Death of many excellent Persons of all Ranks, till the Beginning of the memorable Year 1688, when the *Torrent* stopt in the Death of *Mr. James Renwick*. The principal Articles of his Indictment, and for which he suffered, were his affirming, That the *Duke of York*, then King *James VII.* was not rightful nor lawful King of these Realms, and that because he was a *Papist*, had never sworn the *Coronation-Oath*, and was overthrowing the *fundamental Laws* of the Kingdom; also his affirming and defending the Lawfulness of *defensive Arms*, both for our Civil and Religious Liberties: These *Principles* were espoused by this Church ever since our Reformation from Popery, and were justified by all the three Nations at the *Revolution*. Thus, in our *Skirts* is found the *Blood of the Saints* who suffered during this dismal Period; and, if the ordinary Course of Divine Procedure is observed, all Ranks in *Scotland*

have Reason to fear, that a *Land, defiled with Perjury and Blood*, must be *punished by Blood*; especially when these heinous Abominations have never been duly nor seriously considered nor mourned over, *Lev. 26. 25. 2 Kings 24. 3, 4.*

X. When Apostasy and Defection had come to such a prodigious Height, as is already mentioned, the whole *Protestant Interest* in the three Nations was brought into the greatest Danger, by the Accession of the *Duke of York* unto the Throne, after the Death of his Brother *Charles II. Anno 1685.* He openly profess'd and declared himself a *Papist*, and the Representatives of the Nation, without requiring the Coronation-oath, being met in Parliament, make a Declaration and Offer of Duty unto this *Popish Prince*, wherein they own his absolute Power and Authority, and promise him Obedience without Reserve. In Consequence whereof, tho' the Parliament, that met the following Year, refused to rescind the *penal Statutes* against *Papists*, yet this *Popish Prince* did most tyrannically abrogate and pull down these Hedges of the Reformation, by virtue of his usurped Supremacy and absolute Power; first in his Letter to the Privy Council, dated *August 21st 1686*, wherein, by his Power paramount to the Law, he declares his Resolution to protect his *Catholick Subjects*, and allows them the free Exercise of their Religion in their Houses, and appoints the *Royal Chapel at Holy-wood-house* to be fitted up for *Popish Worship*; whereupon the Land was immediately filled with Swarms of *Popish Priests*, and a *Popish School* is erected at *Holy-wood-house* for corrupting the Youth: And then, by his *Proclamation, February 12th 1687*, he does, by his Prerogative-royal, sovereign Authority and absolute Power, *suspend all penal Laws against Papists*; wherein also there is a *Liberty* granted to these whom he calls *moderate Presbyterians*, but it is under such severe Restrictions, and so *manifestly* in Connection with the Toleration of Popery (for which indeed it was chiefly designed) that none of the Presbyterians took the

the Benefit of it. When severals began to be alarmed at such an open and violent Attack upon the Reformation, wherein such large Favours were granted to the *Papists*, not only as to the Exercise of their Religion, but also capacitating them to enjoy Places of Power and Trust, that this *Toleration* was too bare-fac'd for *Presbyterians* to fall in with; therefore, that the main Design of introducing *Popery* might be the better coloured, and the Reformation *more effectually* (tho' *less sensibly*) unhinged, there comes down a *second Form* of a *Toleration*, in a Proclamation dated *June 28th* that same Year, conceived indeed in more general Terms, but of the same Nature and Import with the former: Therein it is declared, That the *Archbishops* and *Bishops*, and all Subjects of the Protestant Religion, are to be defended in the free Exercise of their Protestant Religion, as by Law established; and likewise, by virtue of the Prerogative and absolute Power, all *penal* and sanguinary Laws, made against any for Non-conformity to the Religion established by Law, or the Exercise of their respective Religions, Rites and Ceremonies, are stopt, suspended and disabled; and a Liberty is granted to all the Subjects to meet and serve God in their own Way and Manner, in private Houses, Chaples, or Places hired or built for the Purpose; providing nothing be preached or taught that may any ways tend to alienate the Hearts of the People from the Government; and *Field-meetings* are still discharged under the severest Penalties. It is evident from the *abrogating* of the *penal Statutes* in this, as well as in the former Proclamation, that this *boundless Toleration* was calculated *chiefly* in favours of the *Papists*, as well as the *former*, altho' they be not expressly named in it; and yet all the *Presbyterian Ministers* in the Kingdom (excepting a very few) not only accepted the Benefit of it, but also a considerable Body of them, met at *Edinburgh*, did send an *Address of Thanks* for the said Toleration, dated *July 21st 1687*, and subscribed in their own Name, and

in the Name of the rest of the Brethren of their Perswasion, wherein *they offer their humble and hearty Thanks* to that Popish Prince, and *bleſs the great God, who put it in his Heart to grant them the ſaid Liberty,* which they call a *gracious and ſurpriſing Favour;* withal *promiſing* (in Obedience to the above Proclamation) *an entire Loyalty in their Doctrine and Practice* conſonant to their known Principles contained in the Confession of Faith) and alſo *beſeeching, that theſe who promote any diſloyal Principles or Practices (as they diſown them) may be lookt upon as none of theirs, whatever Name they may aſſume to themſelves.*

The above boundleſs and illimited Toleration was, no doubt, contrary to the Principles of the Church of Scotland, contained in her Confession of Faith and Larger Catechiſm. The Deſign of the Granter, and the Tendency of the Liberty granted, was the Introduction of Popery and Slavery; its Conveyance was from the King's *absolute Power*, which all were required to obey without Reſerve, ſuſpending and diſabling all the penal Statutes againſt Papiſts, whereby all the legal Bulwarks of the Proteſtant Religion againſt Popery were undermined and overthrown: Likewiſe the particular Proviſo above mentioned, "That nothing ſhould be preach'd or taught, which might any way tend to alienate the Hearts of the People from him, or his Government;" *i. e.* in plain Terms, That no doctrinal Teſtimony ſhould be emitted againſt a Popiſh Prince, and his arbitrary Government, overturning the very Foundations of our Civil as well as Religious Liberties; was a moſt ſinful and unwarrantable, and, in the preſent Juncture, a moſt dangerous Reſtriction and Limitation upon Miniſters in the Exerciſe of their Miniſtry. From all which it is plain, that the *Acceptance* of this Toleration, conveyed after the above Manner, with ſuch an *Address* of Thanks for it, and without any *publick joint Teſtimony* againſt the Evils contain'd in it (except that which was offered by Mr. Renwick, and the few that adhered to him) was not only ſtumbling

bling to many, but became one of our *publick national Sins*.

The above-mentioned *Particulars* are some *Instances* of the Beginning, Progress and Height of the *Backsliding* and *Dejection* of all Ranks of Persons, between the Years 1650 and 1688, from a glorious Reformation formerly attained unto; whereby a reformed Land, a Land of Light, and under the most solemn Engagements to the Lord, became a Land of Perjury and Blood, and was filled with Sin against the Holy One of Israel. Wherefore,

The Ministers associate together, being met in Presbytery, judge it their Duty to testify and bear Witness against all these *hainous Sins and Abominations*; and They did, and hereby do, condemn all the several Sins, Backslidings and Steps of *Dejection* from our Covenanted Reformation above-mentioned, for the particular Reasons and Grounds above condescended upon; and all other Acts and Deeds, in so far as connected with, and supporting, the above Steps of *Dejection*, as contrary to the Word of God, and inconsistent with the Covenanted Principles of this Church founded thereon. And they hereby declare, That they were and are just Causes of the Lord's righteous Quarrel and Controversy with our Princes, our Nobles, Barons, Burgesses, Ministers and Commons of all Sorts in the Land; and that, for the above *hainous Sins and Provocations*, all Ranks of Persons have Reason to mourn before the Lord, lest by their continued and growing Impenitency and Obduration, a righteous and holy God be provoked to come out of his holy Habitation, and visit the Iniquities of our Fathers upon us in this Generation, who are many Ways serving ourselves Heirs unto their Sins and Backslidings; as will appear from the Instances afterwards to be given.

This Church and Land having groined under the Yoke of arbitrary Government, and a hot Persecution for the Space of about 28 Years; the Lord was graciously pleased to break the Yoke from off our Necks, by a glorious and surprising Appearance for

us at the *Revolution*, in the latter End of the Year 1688, whereof the *Prince of Orange* was the happy Instrument, who was afterwards *proclaimed King*, to the Joy and Satisfaction of all such as had a just Sense of the Worth and Value of their *Liberties, Religious and Civil*: Wherefore *this Presbytery* judge it their Duty, to *commemorate with Thankfulness the Divine Power and Goodness manifested in this wonderful Work, whereby all the Three Nations were rescued from Popery and Slavery*. This Deliverance was seasonable as to the Juncture, and surprizing as to the Manner in which it was given: It was brought about at a Time, when the Designs were open and declared for bringing this Land under *Antichristian Idolatry and Darkness*, when *Papists* were advanced to the most considerable Posts, when the penal Statutes against them were abrogate by a absolute dispensing Power, assum'd and usurp'd by a *Popish Tyrant*, supported by a numerous Army, and at a Time when the whole Land was couching under these grievous Burdens: Neither was it our *own Sword* or our *own Bow*, but the *Right-hand of the Lord and his holy Arm, that wrought Salvation* for us. It might have been justly expected, upon the Back of such a remarkable and great *Appearance of God*, that former Iniquities and Backslidings should have been particularly acknowledged, and the *House of God* purged, and that Reformation-work should have been advanced and carried on, after the Example and Practice of former reforming Periods: But, instead of this, our *Transgressions are multiplied*, new Sins and Backslidings are added to our former Trespases and Defections; *Forty Years* and upwards have we in this Generation grieved the Lord in the *Wilderness*; we have sinned with our Fathers, and have not understood his Wonders, nor remembred the Multitude of his Mercies, tho' he saved us for his Name's Sake, that he might make his mighty Power to be known; we have forgot his Works, and have not waited for his Counsel; and, in following Counsels of *Flesh and Blood*, we have

have declined gradually from him, until our Apostasy and Defection in the present Age is come to an Height, in some particular Instances that were not known in former Times.

I. When the Parliament of Scotland met immediately after the Revolution, in the first Session they abolished Prelacy, as a great and insupportable Grievance to this Nation, and contrary to the Inclination of the Generality of the People ever since the Reformation, they having reformed from Popery by Presbyteries: And in the second Session of the same Parliament, Anno 1690, Presbyterian Church Government and Discipline is established and ratified, according to the Civil Ratification and Establishment given unto the Government of this Church Anno 1592. Thus a retrograde Motion is made near an hundred Years backward; and all the legal Securities given to this Church, in that Covenanting Period from 1638 to 1650, are overlook'd and pass'd by. Likewise all the Acts of the first Session of the first Parliament of King Charles II. together with the infamous Act Rescissory (Anno 1661) whereby a Covenanted Reformation was razed, and the Acts and Deeds of that Covenanting Period were declared seditious and treasonable, are left untouched in this above-mention'd Settlement. Prelacy is never considered as contrary to the Word of God, and abjured by our Covenants: nor our Presbyterian Church Government and Discipline, as what the Land is bound and obliged to maintain by the most solemn Oaths and Covenants: The Indignities done to the National and Solemn League and Covenant, and consequently to the most high God, the great Party in them, are never regarded; but these Solemn Oaths and Covenants are left buried under an Act Rescissory, and other Acts and Deeds subversive of them. If this Nation, when an Opportunity and Season was given them, and when the Lord gave such a remarkable and wonderful Deliverance unto them, did not resent the Indignities and Injuries done in the former Period to the great God, whose awful and holy Name

was interposed in these solemn *Oaths and Covenants*; it is a righteous, just and holy Dispensation of Providence, that we should be *no more a Nation*; and that our *Noblemen, Barons and Burgeses*, who had such a *Golden Season* and Opportunity put into their Hands for honouring God, and doing Justice to that *great Name* which was abused and profaned in such a dreadful and unparalleled Manner, *should for ever be deprived of the Opportunity of acting by themselves in a Parliamentary Capacity*. Likewise, by the same Parliament, the *Oath of Allegiance* to the Sovereign is appointed to be sworn, "In Place of any other
 " Oaths imposed by Laws and Acts of preceeding
 " Parliaments. " Tho' it may be said, that this has a Respect to the Oaths imposed during the persecuting Period, yet the Terms in which the Act is conceived appear plainly to exclude the *Oath of the Covenant*, which contained a very solemn Test of Allegiance to the Sovereign; especially when it is considered, that the above-mentioned *Act Rescissory* was not repealed, and also that the Draught of an Act for excluding such as had a Share in the Oppressions of the former Period, from Places of publick Trust, was laid aside, after it was twice read in Parliament: Hence such were admitted into Places of publick Trust and Power, as were both in Principle and Practice opposite to a Covenanted Reformation. Thus after our great Deliverance, we mingled ourselves *again with these*, and learn'd of them their Ways.

II. The first General Assembly of this Church after the *Revolution* did sit down *Anno 1690*, under the Shadow of the above *Civil Establishment*, and never reclaimed against what was defective in the same, but kept Measures with the *State* in their several Acts and Deeds at that Juncture. It is not here intended to detract from that Regard that is due to the Memory of these worthy Ministers, and others, who came out of the Furnace of a hot Persecution, and did bear a Part in our first General Assemblies
 after

after the Revolution; yet it is necessary, both for the Sake of the present as well as succeeding Generations, to mention some *considerable Omissions*, of which Ministers and many others have complained, and which cannot be otherwise look'd upon, than as *standing Grounds and Causes of the Lord's Displeasure and Controversy with us*, and as one of the Springs of the many Evils which have since that Time betallen this Church and Land. It was the laudable Practice in Reforming Times to condemn all Steps of Defection, and duly to censure such as were guilty of publick Backsliding: Accordingly, by the Assembly that met *Anno* 1638, all the *Prelates*, being Ring-leaders in the Apostasy, were deposed, and some of them excommunicate; also, in the said Reforming Period, they returned to the Lord, by a particular Acknowledgment and Confession of the Sins of the Ministry, and of the whole Land, and by renewing their solemn Covenant-engagements. But the *General Assembly* that met in the Year 1690 made no particular Acknowledgment of the many hainous Backslidings of the former Period; but on the contrary, when many lamentable Steps of Defection and Apostasy were complained of in a *large Paper* offered to the foresaid Assembly 1690, by Mr. *Alexander Shields* and other two Ministers, the said Assembly was so far from attempting the Redress of these Grievances, that they approve the Report of their *Committee of Overtures*, calling them † “ Unseasonable and impracticable Proposals, uncharitable and injurious Reflections, tending rather to kindle Contentions than to compose Divisions.” And tho' many iniquous and blasphemous Statutes were made in the *two persecuting Reigas* for dethroning the glorious Redeemer, and pulling the *Crown which he should alone wear* from his *Royal Head*; yet the Assembly 1690 did not assert the Divine Right of Presbytery, and the intrinsic Power of the Church, which are two special Branches of his glorious Headship in and over

the same: And *that* Power and Authority given by the Lord Jesus to the Office-bearers of his House, to hold their Meetings in his Name, was not stedfastly adhered unto, in regard, that tho' the King's *Commissioner* dissolved the Assembly 1692, and tho' their Meetings were adjourned from Time to Time by the King's Proclamation till the Year 1694; yet there is not any *standing* Testimony against such sinful In-croachments upon the Rights and Liberties of Christ's spiritual Kingdom. And neither the foresaid Assembly 1690, nor any of the Assemblies of the Church since that Time, did by any one *formal Act* or Statute *explicitely* and *judicially* condemn the sacrilegious Usurpation of his Royal Dignity, by that blasphemous *Supremacy* arrogated during that bloody Period; nor asserted him to be, what he really is, *The alone supreme Head and King over his Church, as his free and independent Kingdom*. It is true indeed, that the Assembly 1690, in their Act appointing a *National Fast*, own, "That the Supremacy was advanced (*viz.* in the preceeding Reigns) in such a Way, and to such a Height, as never any Christian Church acknowledged." Yet they do not *absolutely* condemn that usurped Supremacy, nor expressly assert the Headship and Sovereignty of Christ, *in Opposition* to the bold and daring Invasion made upon it in the late Times of lamentable Defection and grievous Persecution. Further, they did not expressly approve the Covenanted Reformation of this Church attained unto from the Year 1638 to 1650; Nor did they justify the Wrestlings, Testimonies and Sufferings of the Lord's Remnant in the late persecuting Times, for the same; Nor has the *Obligation* of our *Covenants, National and Solemn League*, and their binding Force upon Posterity, ever been expressly asserted by any particular Act of Assembly since the Revolution; Nor has the Solemn League and Covenant been expressly named in any of the Grounds of National Fasting since that Time; Tho' both these might have been expected, considering how these

Covenants

Covenants were so openly violate, and ignominiously burnt, in the former Period. Also the above-mentioned sinful and Conscience-hardning *Oaths, Bonds and Declarations*, whereby Christ was sacrilegiously robb'd of his Royal Crown and Dignity, his Servants oppressed, by some of which the Nation gave up with their valuable *Civil Liberties* as well as their *Religious Privileges*, and by every one of which the Land was involved in the dreadful Sin and Guilt of Perjury; yet these Bonds and Oaths were never expressly and particularly condemned and mourned over: Neither has the *Subversion* of our Covenanted Reformation, by these *Parliamentary Deeds*, which laid a Foundation for the Tyranny and Bloodshed which followed thereupon, been particularly acknowledged in any of our Acts appointing National Fasts since the Revolution: Neither have such as made *Defection* been duly *condemned*; but, on the contrary, the Index of the unprinted Acts of Assembly 1690 bears a publick Declaration by the *Moderator*, "That the Assembly would depose no Incumbents simply for their Judgment anent the Government of the Church;" That is, they declare, That the perfidious Prelates and their Underlings were not to be deposed for their treacherous Defection from the Covenanted Principles of this Church: And, in a Consistency with this Declaration, the *Assembly* 1694 * enjoin their *Commission* (as several Assemblies afterwards did) "To receive into Ministerial Communion such of the late conform Ministers, as, having qualified themselves according to Law, shall subscribe the *Formula*," which was then framed for them; whereby they were not bound to acknowledge that Presbyterian Government is founded on the Word of God, but only, "That the Church-government, as now settled by Law, is the only Government of this Church." Nor are Elders required to sign any other *Formula* to this Day. Upon the Signing of the above *Formula*, a great

* Act II. § 6.

great many Prelatical Ministers and Elders were admitted into the Bosom of the Church, and had Access to sit in Judicatories, without requiring any Evidence of their Repentance, or Sorrow for their hainous and scandalous Defection: As will be evident from the *Commission's Address* to Queen Anne, recorded Act 10th, Assembly 1712; wherein they have these Words; "We cannot but lay before your Majesty this pregnant Instance of our Moderation, That since our late happy Establishment there have been taken in, and continued, Hundreds of dissenting (*i. e.* Episcopal) Ministers upon the easiest Terms." When these Things are duly considered, and former Reforming Periods and ~~this~~ compared, what a vast Difference is there between the House of God in Scotland in its former Lustre and Glory, and the Fabrick and Building as it was now reared up by Church and State at the Revolution! The above Practice, both of Church and State, is contrary to *Scripture Pattern and Example*, and the *Practice* of Reforming Times recorded there, 2 *Chron.* 34. 29. to the Close, *Exra* 9 and 10 Chap. *Neh.* 9 and 10 Chap. *Psal* 178 and *Psal* 136. throughout.

III. Tho' the above *Omissions* were frequently regreted by Ministers and others; yet it was still alledged, that the Land was no way *ripe* to return by solemn National Covenanting to the Lord, and that it was not a *proper Time* and Season to be too particular in mentioning publick National Sins, and in condemning the gross Defections and hainous Backslidings of the former Period. Thus, when the present Season and Opportunity of necessary Duty was neglected, it came to be *altogether lost*; particularly when, by the *Treaty of Union*, we were brought under the more immediate Influence of our Neighbours in England, whose Principles as to Church Government and Discipline, and in several Points that concern the Worship of God, differ widely from ours. Our Covenant-Union with England, Anno 1643, was reckoned

reckoned the Honour and Glory of the Three Lands at that Time; it was an *Union* for carrying on and advancing a Work of Reformation in *England* and *Ireland*, according to the Word of God, and the Example of the best Reformed Churches: But, by the foresaid *Treaty of Union*, we were *incorporate* with them upon *Terms* *opposite* unto, and *inconsistent* with our *Covenant-Union*; in regard the Maintenance and Preservation of the Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline of the Church of *England* is made a *fundamental* and essential Part of the *Union* of the *Two Kingdoms*. The *Commission* of the *General Assembly* that were met at that Time, being informed, That, in the *Act of Ratification* of the Articles of the *Treaty of Union*, which the Parliament of *Scotland* were about to pass, it was declared, That the *Parliament of England* might provide for the *Security* of the *Church of England*, as they should think expedient, to take Place within the Bounds of the Kingdom of *England*; Therefore the said *Commission*, in their *Representation* and *Petition* of the 16th of *January 1707*, given in to the Parliament, remonstrate against the foresaid *Clause* in the *Act of Ratification*, not only as putting a *Blank* in the Hands of the Parliament of *England*, to enact what they should think fit for securing the *Hierarchy* and *Ceremonies* of their Church; but also as a *Consent on the Part of Scotland*, that it be an *Article* and *Fundamental* of the *Union*, and as it is contained in the *Ratification*, implying a manifest *Homologation* of the said *Hierarchy* and *Ceremonies*: Therefore they crave, "That there may be no such
 " *Stipulation* or *Consent* for the *Establishment* of
 " the *Hierarchy* and *Ceremonies*, as they would not
 " involve themselves and the Nation in *Guilt*, and
 " as they would consult the *Peace* and *Quiet* of this
 " Nation both in *Church* and *State*." But as the ensuing *General Assembly* only approved of the Proceedings of this *Commission* in *common Form*, without an express *Approbation* of their *Conduct* in this
 Parti-

Particular, tho' Matters of less Moment have sometimes been particularly noticed; so the *Parliament of Scotland* nowise regarded the foresaid Representation and Petition, having in their *Act of Ratification* given their Consent, That the *Maintenance of the Hierarchy and Ceremonies in England should be a fundamental and essential Article of the Union*. And tho' it was then alledged, That the said *Union* was the best Mean to secure our Religion and Liberties against the Attempts of a *Popish Pretender* and his Adherents; yet, as it was upon Terms contrary to our Covenant-Union, so we hereby declared our Confidence in an *Arm of Flesh*, and not in the *living God*, who had so often and so wonderfully saved us from our Enemies. And, upon all these Grounds and Reasons, the foresaid *Union* may be justly look'd upon as *contrary to, and condemned by the Word of God*, *Jer. 2. 16, 17, 18, 36, 37. Ezek. 17. 15. Isa. 30. 1, 2, 3. Chap. 31. 1, 2, 3.* Whereupon the said *Union* is become one of our *publick National Sins*; and from this Time, instead of making Progress in Reformation-Work, we have been declining and backsliding every Day, and have fallen under the Weight of such Grievances as shake the Foundation of our *Presbyterian Church Government and Discipline*. For,

IV. Among the more immediate bitter and sinful *Fruits* of the foresaid *incorporating Union*, the whole Nation was made to groan under the Weight of unnecessary, superfluous and sinful *Oaths*; and indeed, *because of Swearing*, to this very Day, *the Land mourneth*. How oft are the same *Oaths repeated*, even upon one and the same Day, to qualify Men to act in different Capacities? How often are Dealers in Candles and Leather obliged to swear? How do many of the *trading Part* of the Nation involve themselves in *Perjury*, by the ordinary *Custom-house Oaths* at the Entry of *Ships*? And how much Guilt do they bring upon themselves, and the whole Land, by *running of Goods*, and such like fraudulent Practices, which

are

are frequently attended with a very gross Profanation of the Lord's Day? How is the Name of God profaned, and the just Sense and Impression of the Importance, Weight and Solemnity of an Oath, and also the dreadful Guilt and Danger there is of rash and false Swearing, worn off the Spirits of many, by a frequent and unnecessary repetition of Oaths? Likewise a superstitious Form of *Swearing* was soon introduced among us from *England*, by *laying the Hand upon, and kissing the Gospels*; a very corrupt Innovation in that solemn Piece of Divine Worship, and contrary to Scripture-Pattern, which alone should regulate us, as in every other Part, so in this solemn Act of Worship. Also the *Sacramental Test*, and Conformity to the Liturgy and Ceremonies of the Church of *England*, is required of the *Members* of this Church, while serving the Sovereign in *England* and *Ireland*. The *Commission* of the *General Assembly*, in their *Petition* to the Parliament of *Scotland*, November 8th 1706, represented, *That this might prove of most dangerous Consequences to the Church*; yet, in the *Treaty of Union*, there was *no particular Provision made against it*. The fatal and dangerous Consequences of the same are every Day more and more seen; Persons of all Ranks resorting to *England*, and conforming occasionally to the Liturgy and Ceremonies there; That Zeal and Concern manifested by this Church in former Times, for the Purity of Divine Institutions, is gradually decaying, it is daily languishing; and a nauseous Lukewarmness and detestable Indifferency doth prevail among us, about the Worship, Government and Discipline of the Lord's House. Also, immediately after the *Union*, the *Oath of Abjuration* was imposed upon all Persons in publick Trust, both Civil and Military: This *Oath* was fram'd at first by the Parliament of *England*, and calculated for the Maintenance of their Constitution both in Church and State; and as the *Commission*, in their last-mentioned *Address*, observe, " It bears a Reference to
 " some Acts of the *English* Parliament, wherein are
 H " some

“ some Qualifications required in the Successor to
 “ the Crown,” (*viz.* That he should be of the
 Communion of the Church of *England*, and shall
 maintain the Church of *England*, as by Law esta-
 blished) “ which are not suitable to our Principles.”
 In all the above particular Instances, the whole
 Land is more and more involved in Sin, *Amos* 8. 14.
Jer. 4. 2. Chap. 23. 10.

V. In the Year 1712, an almost *boundless* Toleration
 is granted, by which the Government and Disci-
 pline of this Church were exceedingly weakned, and
 a wide Door was opened for Laxness in Principle,
 which never fails to bring alongst with it Loosness in
 Practice. This *Toleration*, as the *then Commission* of
 the General Assembly observed in their Address to
 Queen *Anne*, “ Is such as gives a large Licence al-
 “ most to all Error and Blasphemy, throws up all good
 “ Discipline, to the Dishonour of God, and the
 “ Scandal and Ruin of the Christian Religion.”
Tolerations of this Kind are contrary to the Word
 of God, 2 *Chron.* 34. 33. *Ezra* 7. 25, 26. *Zech.*
 13. 2, 3. *Rom.* 13. 3, 4. *Rev.* 2. 2, 14, 15, 20.
 Chap. 17. 12, 16, 17. and to the Principles of this
 Church contain'd in Confession, Chap. 20. § 4. Chap.
 23. § 3. and the Answer to the Question in the
 Larger Catechism, *What are the Sins forbidden in the*
second Commandment? And the *present* was mainly
 intended and designed for strengthening and sup-
 porting a malignant and disaffected Party in
Scotland, who, ever since the Revolution, have
 openly espoused the Cause and Interest of a *Popish*
Pretender, and whose Meetings to this Day are not
 only *Nurseries* of Superstition, but *Seminaries* of Dis-
 affection to our *Sovereign King George*, and the Prote-
 stant Succession in his illustrious Family. As this
boundless Toleration is a Stroke and Judgment upon
 this Church and Land, so the Growth of Error and
 Superstition, the genuine Fruits and Effects of the
 same, may be justly reckoned among the Causes of
 the Lord's Wrath against sinful and backsliding

Scotland. It deserves also to be noticed, that the *English Liturgy and Ceremonies* were never received, even by these of the *Episcopal Denomination* in *Scotland*, till after the late incorporating Union, when a Manner of Worship, never practised in *Scotland*, was set up in all the Corners of the Land.

Together with the said Act of *Toleration*, the above-mentioned *Oath of Abjuration*, which was at first required to be sworn (as is already observed) by all Persons in Civil and Military Trust, was now imposed upon the *Ministers* of this Church, which, beside the dismal Effects it produced in *renting and breaking the Ministry among themselves*, may be justly reckoned one of our *publick National Sins*; in so far as the *united Constitution*, directly opposite to our *Covenant-union*, is thereby homologate and sworn unto; and in regard the said *Oath*, together with the *Allegiance*, is substitute in the Room of our *Solemn National Covenants*, which contain the strictest Engagements of Duty to the *Sovereign*, a most solemn Renunciation of *Popery*, and consequently of all *Popish Pretenders* whatsoever.

VI. In the foresaid Year 1712, the *Right of Presentation* to vacant Congregations claimed by *Patrons* was again restored unto them: Against this the Church of *Scotland* has always testified, as subversive of the *Right of Election* belonging to Christian Congregations by the Word of God, as in the *second Book of Discipline*, Chap. 12. “The Liberty of the
“ Election of Persons called to the Ecclesiastical
“ Functions, and observed without Interruption so
“ long as the Kirk was not corrupted by *Antichrist*,
“ we desire to be restored and retained within this
“ Realm; so that none be intruded upon any Con-
“ gregation, either by the Prince or any in-
“ ferior Person, without lawful Election, and the
“ Assent of the People over whom the Person is
“ placed; as the Practice of the Apostolical and
“ Primitive Kirk and good Order crave.” As the
Act of Parliament restoring the *Right of Presenta-*
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tion to Patrons, was a heavy Stroke upon this Church ; so the Countenance that has been given unto this *Antichristian Usurpation* by the *present Judicatories* of the Church, in the Settlement of Ministers upon *Presentations* from *Patrons*, over *reclaiming* and *dissenting* Congregations, is one of the *Sins* and *Corruptions* of the *present* Time, whereby the Lord Jesus, the only Lord and Lawgiver to his Church, is dishonoured, and his Heritage wounded, scattered and broken, as may be afterwards more particularly considered.

VII. Besides the Toleration and Patronage Acts, *Countenance* is given by Authority of Parliament to the Observation of *Holy-days* in *Scotland*, by the *Vacation* of our most considerable *Courts of Justice* in the latter End of *December*. This superstitious Practice was condemned by the Acts and Constitutions of this Church, and declared by the General Assembly that met at *Glasgow Anno 1638*, to be abjured by the *National Covenant*.

These are some Instances of the gradual *Declinings* of this Church and Land from Reformation-purity, that did take Place between that remarkable and wonderful Appearance of Divine Providence in the Year 1688, and the *Accession* of our late *Sovereign King George* to the Throne. Therefore this *Presbytery* judge it their Duty to condemn, likeas they hereby do condemn, all the foresaid Steps of Defection, for the several Grounds and Reasons above condescended upon, as contrary to the Word of God and our solemn Covenant-engagements : And they hereby declare, that they are National Sins, and every one of them may be justly reckoned among the Grounds and Causes of the Lord's Indignation and Controversy with us, for which all Ranks of Persons have Reason to be deeply humbled before the Lord.

Tho', instead of making Progress in Reformation-work, many valuable Pieces of Reformation, once attained unto by this Church and Land, were not only neglected, but upon the Matter given up at
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the *Revolution*; and tho', instead of holding fast what was then attained unto, the Church of *Scotland* did lose Ground, and was involv'd in new Steps of Declining and Backsliding; and at the same Time, tho' a malignant and disaffected Party were unwearied in their Plots and Projects to destroy any good Work the Lord had wrought for us by the Revolution: Yet the Lord, whose Name is *Gracious and Merciful, Long-suffering, and Slow to Anger*, dealt not with us according to the Desert of our Sins, but, under many frowning and wrath-like Dispensations of Providence, *remembered Mercy*, and *saved us from our Enemies*, and *put them to Shame that hated us*. Therefore, among the many remarkable Appearances of God for his Church and People in this Land, *this Presbytery* judge it their Duty to *commemorate and record* with Thankfulness, the Deliverance from threatned Ruin that was brought about by the *Right-hand of the Lord* in the Years 1714 and 1715; when in the latter End of *Queen Anne's* Reign thick and dark Clouds covered us, and when it was evident that *Designs* were not only formed, but very far advanced, for placing a *Popish Pretender* upon the Throne of these Realms; which, if they had taken Place, would have brought the *Three Nations* back into the same miserable Circumstances in which they were immediately before the Revolution: But the Lord was graciously pleased to scatter the Clouds, and to disappoint these Projects, by the *seasonable Accession* of our late Sovereign King *George* to the Throne. This was like *another Revolution*, brought about by his immediate Hand, who *cuts off the Spirit of Princes*, and appears *terrible to the Kings of the Earth*. No sooner was this Deliverance given us, than an *unnatural Rebellion* broke forth in our Bowels; the Interests of a *Popish Pretender* were openly espoused, and a Banner was displayed against the *Revolution-interest*, our Sovereign King *George*, and the *Protestant Succession in his Royal Family*, and that by a Set of Men in this Land for whose Sake the *Toleration* above-men-

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tioned was granted, and who were always declared Enemies to *Scotland's Covenanted Reformation*; But the Lord was graciously pleased to break their Measures, to pour Shame and Contempt upon our Enemies, and to *turn War into Peace in all our Borders*.

When the Hand of the Lord was so remarkably seen in working *manifold Deliverances* for us, it might have been expected that something should have been done for carrying on Reformation-work; *What could have been done more for his Vineyard in Scotland, than what he has done? and yet, when he looked that we should have brought forth Grapes, we have brought forth wild Grapes.* Since this last Deliverance, we have not only fallen asleep, as if we had no Enemy to fear, but as if we had been delivered to add Iniquity to our former Trespases; *Corruption* in Principle and Practice is come to a greater Height in several Instances in this present Age, than in any Period since our Reformation from Popery; damnable and pernicious Principles are propagate, which have a Tendency to raze the Grounds and Foundations of our Christian Faith: *Arian* Blasphemies and *Arminian* Errors have been vented in one of our most considerable *Seminaries* of Learning, where the Youth are trained up for the Holy Ministry; serious Godliness, and the supernatural Work of the Spirit of God upon the Souls of Men in their Effectual Calling, have been treated, even from the *Press*, and otherwise, in a very ludicrous Manner; and yet the Standard of a faithful Testimony, against the prevailing Errors of the Time, has not been lifted up by the Judicatories of the Church. A Form of Godliness, a Shadow of Religion, takes Place of the Power and Life thereof thro' the Land; The Keys of Government and Discipline committed to the Office-bearers of the Church by her glorious *Head*, for the Edification of his Body, and preserving his Institutions in their Purity, for purging the House of God of unsound Ministers and Members, for removing of the Offences whereby the Flock of Christ may

may be hurt or stumbled, and for the Maintenance of the Liberties wherewith Christ hath made his People free, have been *perverted* to quite opposite Ends; the Power of Religion is daily decaying among us, and the very Form of it is despised by many, and by others it is rested upon. But as it is necessary to give some particular Instances of the Progress and Height of the *present* Defection and Backsliding, so this *Presbytery* judge it their Duty to condescend upon the following;

I. A Scheme of pernicious and dangerous Principles has been vented by Mr. *John Simson* Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow; as is evident from the several *Processes* that have been carried on against him.

[I.] When he was processed before the Judicatories of this Church, in the Years 1714, 1715 and 1616, the following dangerous *Errors* are owned and defended by him, in his *Answers* to the *Libel* given in to the *Presbytery* of Glasgow against him, by the Reverend Mr. *James Webster* late Minister of the Gospel at Edinburgh. (1.) That by the Light of Nature, and the Works of Creation and Providence, including Tradition, God has given an obscure objective Revelation to all Men, of his being reconcileable to Sinners; and that the Heathen may know that there is a Remedy for Sin provided, which may be called an *implicite* and *obscure* Revelation of the Gospel; and that it is probable none are excluded from the Benefit of the Remedy for Sin provided by God, and published twice to the whole World, except those who, by their actual Sin exclude themselves, and slight and reject the clearer Light of the Gospel revealed to the Church, or that obscure Discovery, and Offer of Grace made to all without the Church (a): And that, if the Heathen would in Sincerity and Truth, and in the diligent Use of Means that Providence lays to their Hand, seek from God the Knowledge of the Way of Reconciliation, necessary for
their

(a) Answers to Mr. Webster's Libel. p. 77, 78, 79, 115.

*their acceptable serving of him, and being saved by him; he would discover it to them, (b). Likewise he affirms, That there are Means appointed of God for obtaining saving Grace, which Means, when diligently used with Seriousness, Sincerity and Faith of being heard, God has promised to bless with Success; and the going about these Means in the foresaid Manner, is not above the Reach of our natural Ability and Power (c). All these Propositions are directly contrary to the Doctrine held forth from the Word of God in our Confession of Faith; particularly Chap. 1. § 1. where, according to the Scriptures cited, we are taught that, " Altho' the Light of Nature, and the Works " of Creation and Providence, do so far manifest the " Goodness, Wisdom and Power of God, as to " leave Men inexcusable; yet they are not sufficient " to give that Knowledge of God, and of his Will, " which is necessary unto Salvation." Whereas, by the above Propositions, Mr. Simson affirms, That the End and Design of *Natural* Religion is, not only to leave Men inexcusable; but that thereby an obscure Offer of Grace is given them, and an implicate Revelation of the Gospel made unto them; and that the Benefit of the Remedy provided for Sin extends to all without the Church, who do not slight and reject this obscure Discovery and Offer of Grace: And therefore this *obscure* Revelation and Offer of Grace is such as lays a Foundation for the *Heathen*, in the diligent Use of the Means which Providence lays to their Hands, their seeking in Sincerity and Truth the Knowledge of the Way of Reconciliation; whereby some kind of *Sufficiency* is given to *Natural* Religion, yea, such a *Sufficiency*, as lays a Foundation and Ground for Hope and Confidence towards God, for obtaining some way or other Reconciliation to him, and consequently *eternal* Salvation; contrary to *Eph. 2. 12.* where the whole *Heathen* World are declared to be *without God* and *without Hope*. And, whatever Advantages the *Heathen* may be supposed*

posed to have by Tradition, yet the Apostle testifies That the *World by Wisdom knew not God*; and they were so far from seeking after the Knowledge of the Way of Reconciliation, that when it was published unto them by the Gospel, they rejected the same as Foolishness, and not agreeable to their carnal Reasonings, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21, 25. *Isa.* 65. 1. with *Rom.* 10. 20. Besides, by the above Propositions, Mens natural Powers and Abilities, whether they be *within* or without the Church, are *exalted* to the Dishonour of God, to the Disparagement of his sovereign and efficacious Grace, and in direct Contrariety to that miserable State and Condition into which all Mankind are brought by their Apostasy from God in the *first Adam*, being *dead in Trespasses and Sins*, under the Power of spiritual Darkeness, and not only *Enemies to God*, but by Nature *Enmity* against him; as is held forth from the Scriptures in our Confession of Faith, Chap. 9. § 3. “Man, by his Fall into a State of Sin, hath wholly lost all Ability of Will to any spiritual Good accompanying Salvation; so as a natural Man, being altogether averse from that Good; and dead in Sin, is not able by his own Strength to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereto.” The above Propositions, concerning Man’s Powers and Abilities in a natural State, are more dangerous, when it is considered, that Mr. *Simson* rejects the ordinary Answer given by our orthodox Divines to a *Pelagian* Objection, *viz.* That *it is unjust in God to command what we have no Power to perform.* All Reformed Divines make Answer, that we had sufficient Power and Ability in *Adam*, but have lost it by our Fall; and tho’ we have lost Power to *obey*, yet God has a just Right to *command.* This Answer Mr. *Simson* rejects as no way sufficient, and substitutes what is contained in the above Propositions in the Room of it, *Answers*, p. 210, &c. whereby, instead of removing the Objection, he gives up the Cause of Truth to the *Pelagians* and *Arminians*, to the Dishonour of God, and hardning of these gross Perver-

ters of the Truth, and to the subverting and poisoning of those with whom he was intrusted to train up for the holy Ministry. (2.) The said Mr. *Simson* maintains and defends, *That there was no proper Covenant made with Adam for himself, and his Posterity* (d): *That Adam was not a fæderal Head to his Posterity* (e); and that *if Adam was made a fæderal Head, it must be by Divine Command, which is not found in the Bible* (f). The above Propositions are contrary to the Doctrine held forth from the Word of God, in our *Confession*, Chap. 6. § 3. Chap. 7. § 2. and the *Answer* to the *Question* in the Larger and Shorter *Catechisms*; *Did all Mankind fall in Adam's first Transgression?* The above gross and erroneous Propositions are the Foundation and Ground of a Chain of Principles connected with them, whereby the Reformed Doctrine contained in our *Confession* of *Faith* is undermined and overturned; for, by the Denial of the *fæderal Representation*, the proper *Imputation* of *Adam's* first Sin falls to the Ground: And tho' the *Professor* pretends to maintain the *Imputation* of *Adam's* first Sin, from the Sanction of the Law, yet his Reasoning amounts to no more than that his Posterity are *punished* for the same. When *Adam's* fæderal Representation of his Posterity is disowned, his *first Sin* can no more be called *theirs*, than the Sins of their immediate Parents. That this proper *Imputation* of *Adam's* first Sin is denied by him, will further appear from the following gross and dangerous Propositions which he maintains and defends. For, (3.) He affirms, *That it is inconsistent with the Justice and Goodness of God to create a Soul without Original Righteousness, or any Disposition to Good* (g); and that *the Souls of Infants since the Fall, as they come from the Hands of their Creator, are as pure and holy, as the Souls of Infants would have been created, supposing Man had not fallen*; and that *they are created as pure and holy as Adam's was, except as to these*
Quali-

(d) *Answers*, p. 166. (e) p. 174. (f) p. 176. (g) p. 225.

Qualifications and Habits which he received, as being created in an adult State (h). These Propositions are directly contrary to the Doctrine held forth from the Word of God in our Confession, Chap. 6. § 2, 3, 4. And the Answer to the Question in the Larger and Shorter Catechisms; Wherein consists the Sinfulness of that Estate whereinto Man fell? And the Answer to the Question in the Larger Catechism; How is Original Sin conveyed from our first Parents to their Posterity? (4) Mr. Simson also affirms and defends, That 'tis probable, that, of the whole Race of Mankind, more are elected and saved, than reprobated and damned (i). He owns, that of the adult, or these come to Years, it is plain from Scripture, that the most Part are neither elected nor saved: But, that he may account for the Number of the Elect and Saved, he asserts, That it is more than probable that baptised Infants, dying in Infancy, are all saved (k); and that it is manifest, if God should deny his saving Grace to all, or any of the Children of Infidels, he would deal more severely with them than he did with the fallen Angels (l). By the above Propositions, Mr. Simson judges it probable, that all Infants dying in Infancy are included in the Decree of Election; which is very agreeable to the Arminian Scheme, which teacheth, That the Decree of Election is influenced from foreseen Conditions and Qualifications in the Creature; but contrary to the Doctrine held forth from the Word of God in our Confession, Chap. 3. § 5.

*“ Those of Mankind that are predestinated unto
 “ Life, God, before the Foundation of the World
 “ was laid, according to his eternal and immutable
 “ Purpose, and the secret Counsel and good Plea-
 “ sure of his Will, hath chosen in Christ unto ever-
 “ lasting Glory, out of his mere Grace and Love,
 “ without any Foresight of Faith or good Works, or
 “ Perseverance in either of them, or any other
 “ Thing in the Creature, as Conditions or Causes*

I 2

“ moving

(h) p. 226. (i) p. 106. (k) p. 111. (l) Answers, p. 113.

“ moving him thereto, and all to the Praise of his
 “ glorious Grace;” and consequently without any
 Regard unto their Infant or adult State. It is plain
 from the Scriptures, that God hath chosen some of
 Mankind to eternal Life, out of his mere good Plea-
 sure *allenary*, Rom. 9. 11. *For the Children being not*
yet born, neither having done Good or Evil, that the Pur-
pose of God according to Election might stand, not of
Works, but of him that calleth. V. 13. *As it is writ-*
ten, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated. Be-
 sides, by the above Propositions, he maintains the Cer-
 tainty of the Salvation of *all Infants*, when he challen-
 geth his *Maker* with exercising greater Severity towards
 them, in case he should deny his saving Grace to any of
 them, than is exercised towards the fallen Angels;
 especially when this is compared with his other *Pro-*
position, noticed above, *That none are excluded from*
the Benefit of the Remedy for Sin provided, but these who
by their actual Sins exclude themselves. All these *Pro-*
positions have an evident Tendency to lead Men to
 low Thoughts of the Evil and Desert of *Original Sin*
 imputed and inherent, if it is true that there is no
 Ground to fear the Damnation of any upon the Ac-
 count of this Sin, tho’ it is the bitter Fountain and
 Spring of all our actual Transgressions, and makes us
 Children of Wrath by Nature: According to the
 Doctrine held forth from the Word of God in our
Confession, Chap. 6. § 6. “ Every Sin, both Original
 “ and Actual, being a Transgression of the righte-
 “ ous Law of God, and contrary thereto, doth in
 “ its own Nature bring Guilt upon the Sinner; where-
 “ by he is bound over to the Wrath of God, and
 “ Curse of the Law, and so made subject to Death,
 “ with all Miseries Spiritual, Temporal and Eternal.”
 (5) Mr. *Simson* likewise impugns the *immediate pre-*
vious Divine Concourse with all the Actions of the
 reasonable Creature, and in Place thereof affirms,
That God may determine infallibly all the Actions of
reasonable Creatures, that are not above their natural
Powers, and are not contrary to their natural Inclina-
tions and Dispositions, by placing them in such Circum-
stances

stances, by which they have a certain Series and Train of Motives laid before them, by which they may infallibly, yet freely, produce such a Series of Actions, as he has decreed: And this (says he) may be sufficient for ascertaining all the Events of sinful Actions, and of the ordinary natural and civil Actions of Men (m). It is true, the Providence of God is a great Depth, his Ways are unsearchable, and his Judgments past finding out: The Terms that have been used by Reformed Divines, in explaining the Doctrine of Providence, some of them are not in our Confession, being nowise adapted to vulgar Capacities; yet the immediate Divine Concurrence with all the Actions of the reasonable Creature, has been affirmed and maintained by Reformed Divines in Opposition to Jesuites and Arminians, and is necessary for maintaining and asserting the absolute Dominion of God over the free Actions of reasonable Creatures, and their immediate Dependence upon him in Motion and Action, as well as in their Being, and Preservation in the same; whereas the Way whereby Mr. Simson explains the Divine Providence about all the Actions of reasonable Creatures, leaves the Creature independent in Motion and Action upon the adorable Creator. Tho' some of the ordinary Terms, that are used by Divines upon this Subject, are not in our Confession of Faith; yet the Doctrine of the immediate previous Divine Concurrence with all the Actions of the reasonable Creature, as it is explained by our Reformed Divines, is plainly held forth therein from the Word of God, Chap. 5. § 4. "The almighty Power, unsearchable
 " Wisdom, and infinite Goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his Providence, that it extendeth itself even to the first Fall, and all other Sins
 " of Angels and Men; and that not by a bare Permission, but such as hath joined with it a most
 " wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering
 " and governing of them in a manifold Dispensation
 " to his own holy Ends; yet so as the Sinfulness
 " pro.

(m) *Answers*, p. 124.

“ proceedeth only from the Creature, and not from
 “ God, who, being most holy and righteous, neither
 “ is, nor can be the Author or Approver of Sin.”
 And the *Answer* to the Question in the Larger and
 Shorter Catechism, *What are God's Works of Pro-*
vidence? (6) Mr. Simson likewise affirms and main-
 tains, *That a Regard to our own Happiness, and the*
Prospect of our eternal Felicity and Blessedness in the En-
joyment of God in Heaven, ought to be our chief Motive
in serving the Lord upon Earth (n). He also affirms, in
 Answer to the *first Question* of the Catechism, *That*
our glorifying God, being the Means, is subordinate to
our Enjoyment of him for ever, which is our ultimate
End (o). And, *That, were it not for the Prospect of*
Happiness, we could not, and therefore would not serve
God (p). As Mr. Simson perverts the Doctrine held
 forth from the *Scriptures* cited upon the *Answer* to
 the *first Question* of our Larger and Shorter Cate-
 chism, so as the *Committee* of the *General Assembly*
 1727 very justly observe (*State of the Process*, p.
 277.) “ *What is set forth in the above Article* is con-
 “ trary to the Instinct of that new Nature the Lord
 “ endueth all his People with in Regeneration, which
 “ makes them, by the further Influence of Grace,
 “ desire to serve God for himself and his superemi-
 “ nent Excellencies, and not merely or chiefly for
 “ the Prospect of their own Happiness; whence it
 “ is their greatest Burden that they cannot more
 “ serve him for himself. And considering how much
 “ all Men are bound to make the Glory of God
 “ their chief End, tho’ yet they are called herewith
 “ to pursue Happiness; and likewise, that it is thro’
 “ a prevailing Respect to God’s Honour and Glory,
 “ and not a mere or chief Respect to our own Hap-
 “ piness, that the Difference between Nature and
 “ Grace is to be cleared to the doubtful Christian;
 “ Therefore,——it is no small Dishonour to God,
 “ to teach what is set down in the above Articles,
 “ and

(n) *Answers*, p. 139, — 155. (o) *Ibid.* p. 149. (p) *Ibid.* p. 149.

“ and that the contrary was necessary to be taught.” (7.) Mr. *Simpsen* also maintains and defends it as his Opinion, *That there will be no Sinning in Hell after the last Judgment* (q). This absurd Opinion is contrary to the Doctrine held forth in our *Confession* and *Catechisms* where, according to the *Scriptures*, we are taught, “ That Sin is any Want of Conformity unto, or Transgression of, the Law of God.” And since it is certain, that the Natures of the Damn’d in Hell were never renewed, they can have no Manner of Conformity to the Law of God; and from their corrupt and unrenewed Natures must necessarily flow the highest Enmity and Rage against the Justice and Holiness of God in punishing of them, which is expressed in *Scripture* by *Gnashing of the Teeth*, Mat. 8. 12.

[2.] By another *Process* against the said Mr. *Simson*, begun before the Presbytery of *Glasgow* Anno 1726, and carried on before the *Judicatories* till the *Assembly* 1729 when it was concluded, the said Mr. *Simson* was found guilty of many other gross and dangerous Errors, in regard it was found clearly proven, That, in teaching his *Students*, he had denied the *Necessary Existence of our Lord Jesus Christ*; and that he had affirmed, *That his necessary Existence is a Thing we knew not*; and that the Term *Necessary Existence* was impertinent, and not to be used when talking of the *Trinity*; and that the *Three Persons of the Adorable Trinity* are not to be said to be numerically *One in Substance or Essence*; and that the Terms, *Necessary Existence, Supreme Deity, and the Title of the only true God*, may be taken, and are by some *Authors* taken in a Sense that includes the personal Property of the *Father*, and so not belonging to the *Son*. By all which Propositions, the *Supreme Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ* the second Person of the *Adorable Trinity*, as also the *Supreme Deity of the Holy Ghost* our Comforter and Sanctifier, is blasphemously impugn’d and denied by the said Mr. *Simson*, in direct Opposition to the

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Scriptures of Truth, and the Doctrine held forth from them in our *Confession of Faith*, Chap. 2. § 1, 3. Chap. 8. § 2. Answer to the Question in the *Larger and Shorter Catechisms*, *How many Persons are there in the Godhead?* And *Larger Catechism*, *Question II.* It deserves also to be observed, That some *Hypotheses* adopted by Mr. *Simson*, and which tend to attribute too much to natural Reason, are the very Spring of the above dangerous Errors vented and taught by him. In his second *Letter* to Mr. *Rowan*, he adopts the following *Socinian Propositions*, *That Reason, as it is taken for evident Propositions naturally revealed, is the Principle or Foundation of Theology; and that nothing is to be admitted in Religion, but what is agreeable to Reason, and determined by Reason to be so.* Altho' Mr. *Simson* pretends to disown these *Propositions* as they are maintain'd and explained by the *Socinians*, yet it is obvious from the plain Meaning of the Words, that the above Propositions, adopted by him, exalt Reason above Divine Revelation; contrary to the Doctrine held forth in our *Confession of Faith*, Chap. 1. § 10. "The Supreme Judge, by which
 " all Controversies of Religion are to be determin'd, and all Decrees of Councils, Opinions of
 " ancient Writers, Doctrines of Men and private
 " Spirits are to be examined, and in whose Sentence
 " we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture." And contrary to the *Answer* to the second *Question* in the *Larger and Shorter Catechism*. Mr. *Simson* having once set Reason in the Chair, and exalted it to be Judge in Principles of Faith, it is no wonder that he rejects the Testimony of God in his own Word concerning the *Covenant-headship and Representation of the first Adam*, and the many sacred Truths that are connected with that important Article, and that he has maintained the other Errors charged against him in the *first Process*. From the same Source and Spring also, he was at length led to impugn and deny the *Supreme Deity and Necessary Existence of him whose Name is, Wonder-*

derful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace, Isa. 9. 6.

This PRESBYTERY considering, That the Purity of Doctrine, maintained in this Church, is very much endangered by the above gross and pernicious Errors, and that many may be in Hazard of being tainted with them in a Day wherein Atheism and Infidelity do so much abound: Therefore *they did, and hereby do, upon the weighty Grounds and Reasons above-narrated, CONDEMN*, as contrary to the Word of God, our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, the several Propositions above-mentioned, maintained and defended by Mr. Simson, viz. Ratio, ut sumitur pro propositionibus naturaliter revelatis, est Principium seu fundamentum Theologia; and that nothing is to be admitted in Religion, but what is agreeable to Reason, and determined by Reason to be so; That by the Light of Nature, and Works of Creation and Providence, including Tradition, God hath given an obscure objective Revelation to all Men, of his being reconcilable to Sinners; and that the Heathen may know there is a Remedy for Sin provided, which may be called an implicate or obscure Revelation of the Gospel: That it is probable none are excluded from the Benefit of the Remedy for Sin, provided by God, and published twice to the World, except these who by their actual Sins exclude themselves, and slight or reject either the clear Light of the Gospel revealed to the Church, or that obscure Discovery and Offer of Grace made to all without the Church: That if the Heathen, in the Use of the Means they have, would seek the Knowledge of the Way of Reconciliation, God would discover it to them: That there are Means appointed of God for obtaining saving Grace; which Means, when diligently used with Seriousness, Sincerity and Faith of being heard, God hath promised to bless with Success; and the going about these Means in the foresaid Manner, is not above the Reach of our natural Ability and Power: That there was not a proper Covenant made with Adam for himself and his Posterity: That Adam was not a foederal Head to his Posterity; and that, if

Adam was made a federal Head, it must be by a Divine Command, which is not found in the Bible: That it is inconsistent with the Justice and Goodness of God, to create a Soul without Original Righteousness or Dispositions to Good: That the Souls of Infants since the Fall, as they came from the Hands of their Creator, are as pure and holy, as the Souls of Infants would have been created supposing Man had not fallen; and that they are created as pure and holy as Adam's was created, except as to those Qualifications and Habits, which he received, as being created in an adult State: That it is more than probable that all baptised Infants, dying in Infancy, are saved; and that it is manifest, if God should deny his Grace to all; or any of the Children of Infidels, he would deal more severely with them than he did with the fallen Angels: That there is no immediate previous Divine Concourse with all the Actions of the reasonable Creature; and, That a Regard to our own Happiness, and the Prospect of our eternal Felicity and Blessedness in the Enjoyment of God in Heaven, ought to be our chief Motive in serving the Lord upon Earth; and, That our glorifying God, being the Means, is subordinate to our Enjoyment of him for ever, which is our ultimate End; and, That, were it not for the Prospect of Happiness, we could not, and therefore would not, serve God: That there will be no Sinning in Hell after the last Judgment. And the PRESBYTERY hereby declare all these Propositions, vented and taught by the said Mr. Simson, to be dangerous and pernicious Errors, dishonouring to a God of Truth, and having an evident Tendency to subvert the Souls of Men. As also, this PRESBYTERY did, and hereby do, CONDEMN the several Propositions found clearly proven against the foresaid Mr. Simson, by the several General Assemblies of this Church, Annis 1727, 1728 and 1729; such as, That our Lord Jesus Christ is not necessarily existent; That the Necessary Existence of our Lord Jesus Christ, is a Thing we know not; That the Term Necessary Existence is impertinent, and not to be used in talking of the Trinity; that the Three Persons of the Trinity are not to be said

to be NUMERICALLY One in Substance or Essence; That the Terms Necessary Existence, Supreme Deity, and the Title of the Only True God, may be taken in a Sense that includes the personal Property of the Father, and so not belonging to the Son. All which Propositions they did, and hereby do, declare to be damnable Heresies, denying the Lord that bought us, subverting and overthrowing one of the principal Foundations of our Christian Faith; and to be blasphemous Indignities done to the Person of the Eternal Son of God our Redeemer, as also unto the Person of the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier and Comforter, whereby these adorable Persons are robb'd of their True and Supreme Deity, and reduced unto the Class and Rank of dependent and inferior Beings. As also, they did, and hereby do, declare, That the said Mr. Simson, in regard of the atrocious and hainous Nature of the foresaid Errors, deserved not only Suspension from Teaching and Preaching, but to have been deposed from the Office of the holy Ministry, and excommunicated from all Society, Communion and Fellowship with the Church and People of God, until he give satisfying Evidences of his Repentance and Sorrow for teaching and spreading the foresaid dangerous Errors and Blasphemies.

II. A Scheme of most pernicious and dangerous Principles has been vented by Mr. Archibald Campbell Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of St. Andrews, as is evident from the Books he has published, and from his Explications and Defences in the Process that has been laid against him; In which the following gross Errors are defended by him.

1st, " That the sole and universal Motive to virtuous Actions is Self-love, Interest or Pleasure (a).
 " That Self-love is the great Cause or the first Spring
 " of all our several Motions and Actions, which
 " Way soever they may happen to be directed (b).
 K 2 " That

(a) Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue, p. 463. (b) Enquiry, p. 4.

“ That Self-love is universally the first Spring in every rational Mind, that awakens her Powers, begins her Motions, and carries her on to Action (c).
 “ That Men may refuse to worship God, unless he presents himself favourably inclined to their Interest, and studious of their Happiness (d). That we are to settle it as our main Purpose, to recommend ourselves to the Love, Esteem and Commendation of God, and of all Mankind, by our Moral Virtue (e). That Self-love, as it exerts itself in the Desire of universal unlimited Esteem, is the great commanding Motive that determines us to the Pursuit of Virtue (f). And that, seeing God acts for his Self-interest, we cannot act from any higher Principle than our Self-interest (g).”

All the above *Propositions* are directly contrary to the Word of God, in which it is expressly asserted, That all our religious Actions must proceed from a *new Nature*, and from *Faith* in the Lord Jesus Christ, and from a holy Regard and Love to God, and not from *Self-love* or *Self-interest* as their first Spring and Principle, *Ezek.* 36. 26, 27. *Acts* 26. 18. *John* 15. 4, 5. *Mat.* 22. 37, 39. And that our main Purpose or ultimate End ought not to be the Advancement of our own Self-interest, but the Glorifying of God, that is, the Advancement of his *declarative Glory*, 2 Cor. 5. 15. *Rom.* 14. 7. *Rom.* 15. 1, 2, 3. *John* 5. 30. *John* 7. 18, 2 *Tim.* 3. 2 to 5. In which Places of Scripture it is declared, That our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whose Example we are to imitate, *pleased not himself*, and sought not *his own Will* nor his own Glory, but *the Will and Glory of his Father that sent him*; and that to be Lovers of our own selves that is, to love ourselves *inordinately*, is one of the blackest of Crimes. And it must needs be an *inordinate Self-love*, when, according to Mr. Campbell, our Self-interest or Happiness is made the chief and leading Motive of our Love to God; since, according

(c) *Enquiry*, p. 101. (d) *Enq.* p. 460. (e) P. 273. (f) P. 257, 258. (g) P. 432.

ding to this *selfish Scheme*, we love not God for himself, or for his own Sake, but for *ourselves*; whereby we prefer ourselves to our Maker, and love ourselves more than the adorable Creator, which may be justly reckoned the greatest Impiety. It must also be observed, that as the declarative Glory of God, or the Manifestation of his Being, and the glorious Excellencies and Perfections of his Nature, is the chief End of God in all his Works, for *the Lord hath made all Things for himself*, Prov. 16. 4. so it is very gross and absurd in Mr. C — — — 1 to affirm, that our *Self-Interest* must be the great Cause and first Spring of all our several Actions; and that our Self-love is the great commanding Motive, that determines us to the Pursuit of Virtue; and that because (as he thinks fit to express himself) “The Deity is studious of the Good of his Creatures from *Self-interest (h).*” Thus he wickedly argues, That we, in acting from our own Self-interest, imitate God, and cannot act from a higher and more perfect Principle: What is this else, but to usurp the Throne of God, and to exalt ourselves, if not above him, at least unto an Equality with him? It is an ambitious aspiring to that very Thing, which, thro’ the Subtlety of Satan, was the Inlet at the Beginning to our sinful and shameful Apostasy from our Maker, Gen. 3. 5. *And ye shall be as Gods.* But the whole Scope and Design of Divine Revelation is, to recover us from these *selfish* Principles into which all Mankind are plunged by the Fall, and to bring us back to our primitive Love, Obedience and Subjection to Jehovah; and the whole Word of God proclaims unto us, That as the Lord hath done all Things for himself, that is, for the Manifestation of his own infinite and glorious Excellencies; so the most noble Imitation of God is, to love him *chiefly for himself*, and to yield Subjection and Homage unto him, *because he is God*, and that he may be *glorified in our Bodies and Spirits which are his*: This is the great End

(h) *Enquiry*, p. 432.

End and Design of the whole Œconomy of Grace; and of the Dispensation of the Divine Spirit to Sinners in effectual Calling and Regeneration, that they may be animate and moved from this higher and more excellent Spring and Principle in all the Duties of their Obedience to God, and in every relative Duty towards Men with whom they are associate; as is evident not only from the above, but also from the following Scriptures, 1 Cor. 10. 31. and 6. 20. Mat. 5. 16. Rom. 11. 36. Psal. 115. 1. Rev. 4. 8, 11. Rev. 5. 13. It is also evident from the Word, that God's infinite Perfection, and his glorious Excellencies, are the main Ground and Reason of our loving, obeying and worshipping him; and not chiefly his *Benefits* to us, and his promoting our Happiness: Therefore it is Blasphemy to say, *That we might refuse to worship God, if it were not for the Prospect of promoting our own Happiness*; for tho' God allows us to pursue Happiness, and tho' the Prospect of it may be a *secondary* Motive to our Obedience, yet the Scriptures declare, *That what God is in himself, or his own infinite Perfection, is the primary Ground and formal Reason of the whole of our Obedience and Worship*, Exod. 20. 2. Lev. 19. 12. Psal. 96. 4, 7, 8, 9, 10. Psal. 99. 3, 5. Psal. 104. 1, 2. Psal. 148. throughout. Rom. 1. 21. Rev. 4. 8, 11. Rev. 7. 10, 11. Jer. 10. 6, 7, 10. It must likewise be observed, that, in our best and most virtuous Actions, we can never recommend ourselves to the Love, Favour and Esteem of God, as Mr. C——— affirms; in regard his Love and Favour to any of his Creatures, and much more to sinful Men, is *absolutely free*: As they cannot merit his Favour, so there is no Motive *without himself*, to move him to love them, Hos 14. 4. *I will love them freely*. Deut. 7. 7, 8. *He hath loved you, because he loved you*. Rom. 9. 13. *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*. Compared with Verse 11th, *The Children not being yet born, neither having done any Good or Evil, that the Purpose of God according to the Election might stand,*
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not of Works, but of him that calleth: And whatever we do, we must still reckon ourselves unprofitable Servants.

The above Propositions are likewise contrary to our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, *Con. Chap. 6th, Par. 7.* wherein it is asserted from the Word of God, "That Works done by unregenerate Men, altho', for the Matter of them, they may be Things which God commands, and of good Use both to themselves and others; yet, because they proceed not from an Heart purified by Faith, nor are done to a right End, the Glory of God, they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a Man meet to receive Grace from God." And to *Larg. Cat. Quest. 190, 196.* and *Less. Cat. Quest. 101, 107.* and *Larg. and Less. Cat. Quest. 1st,* wherein it is said, "That Man's chief and highest End is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him for ever;" And to *Less. Cat. Quest. 47.* where, "The not worshipping and glorifying the True God, as God," is the *great Sin forbidden* in the first Commandment; and to *Larg. Cat. Quest. 105.* where "Self-love, Self-seeking, and all other inordinate and immoderate setting of our Mind, Will or Affections upon other Things, and taking them off from God in whole or in Part," are affirmed, from the Scriptures there cited, to be among the Sins forbidden in the first Commandment.

Mr. C——l also affirms, "That Self-Interest or Pleasure is the only Standard by which we can judge of the Virtue, *i. e.* the Value or Goodness, of any Action whatsoever (*i*). That Virtue and Utility are two Words signifying the same Thing (*k*). That the intrinsic Goodness or Rectitude of Moral Virtue lies directly in the Fitness of it to the Self-love and Happiness of Mankind; and that Actions are virtuous only as they promote Self-interest (*l*). And that Moral Goodness, as well as Natural, lies in Advantage and

— "Plea-

“ Pleasure (*m*). And that we like and approve all
 “ the Moral Qualities that are called virtuous, for
 “ no other Reason but for their being good to us,
 “ *i. e.* for the Pleasure they give us, or for their
 “ gratifying our Self-love (*n*). And that the Good-
 “ ness of any Action, from which it is denominate
 “ Moral Virtue, immediately lies in the Conformi-
 “ ty it has to our Self-love, while it concurs and
 “ co-operates with this Principle in approving our
 “ being happy, and to secure and promote our
 “ Well-being. (*o*).”

These Propositions do directly contradict the ho-
 ly Scriptures, in which it is expressly declared, That
 the *Law of God is the adequate and only Standard by
 which the Goodness of Actions is to be tried, and not our
 own Self-Interest and Pleasure.* Isa. 8. 20. 2 Pet. 1.
 19. Psal. 119. 9. Deut. 4. 2. Rev. 22. 18. Psal.
 119. 4, 5. Prov. 30. 6. Exod. 20. 12. Deut. 5. 29.
 Luke 1. 6. Gal. 3. 10. 1 Sam. 15. 22. John 14.
 15, 21. John 15. 14. 1 John 3. 4. And, in re-
 gard the Holiness of God is manifested in his Law,
 and his sovereign Authority is interposed therein, the
Goodness of our Actions doth immediately ly in their
Conformity to the holy Law of God, and in their
 being done by *Faith* in Christ, and from a Respect
 to the *Authority* of God the Law-giver. And there
 is nothing more contradictory to the whole Word of
 God, than to assert, That the *Goodness* of our Love
 to God and his Son Jesus Christ, or of any Act of
 Obedience and Devotion, lies directly in its Fitness
 to promote our personal Interest, Psal. 47. 8. Heb.
 10. 7. Rom. 2. 12, 13, 14. Heb. 10. 38. Heb. 11.
 6. Gal. 2. 20. John 15. 4, 5. And the above Pro-
 positions do likewise Contradict our Confession of
 Faith and Catechisms, Confess. Chap. 1. Par. 2. Chap.
 16. Par. 1, 2. Larg. Cat. Quest. 3. Less. Cat. Quest. 2.
 where it is asserted, That “ the Scriptures are given
 “ by

" by the Inspiration of God to be the Rule of Faith
 " and Life ; and that they are the *only Rule* of Faith
 " and Obedience."

Mr. C——l also asserts, " That Virtue depends
 " not on the arbitrary Will of any Being, but flows
 " from the essential Properties and Nature of Things
 " (a) ;" and that " God's Interests are not in all Re-
 " spects independent on us: That our Happiness is
 " advantageous to God's Nature ; and that Self-love
 " determines God to be studious of our Good ; and
 " that God cannot but reward the Virtuous from
 " Self-love (b)."

These Propositions are contrary to the holy Scrip-
 tures, in which it is asserted, That *God himself*, in the
 wise Purpose and Counsel of his own Will, *laid*
down the whole Plan of the Nature and Relation of
Things, which he freely brings forth in his Works
 of Creation, Providence and Redemption: And
 tho' the Precepts of the Moral Law are eternal and
 immutable, in regard the Holiness and Perfection of
 God's Nature is such, that it cannot be his Will that
 his Creatures should do otherwise ; yet the Scriptures
 also assert, That *God is our Lawgiver*, and affirm his
 absolute Sovereignty and Authority over us, and con-
 sequently, that nothing can be a Law to us but by
his Enacting ; and that what he enacts must be a
 Law to us, whether it be a moral Precept, or a
 Thing in its own Nature indifferent: As is evident
 from the *Positive Precept* given to *Adam* at his Crea-
 tion, and from other *positive* Commands, both under
 the Old and New Testaments ; which, altho' they
 were all wise and good, yet who can say that God was
 necessarily obliged, by his own Nature, to enact them,
 and that he could not possibly have done otherwise ?
 It is therefore grossly erroneous to set up the *Nature*
and Relation of Things as a *Law above God himself*,
 and to maintain that moral Good and Evil flows from
 the essential Properties and Nature of Things, and
 not from the *Holiness of God's Nature* *alienarily*, toge-

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ther with his sovereign Authority and Will manifested in his Law; as is evident from the following Scriptures, *Eph.* 1. 5, 11. *Rom.* 9. 15, to 24. *Rev.* 4. 11. The above Propositions are also contrary to the Doctrine held forth from the Word of God, Confess. Chap. 8. Par. 1. Chap. 19. Par. 5. Larg. Cat. Quest. 12.

From the Word of God and our Confession of Faith we are also taught, that *Creatures can merit no Good from God*; and that he is not obliged to reward their Services; and that all the Rewards he has promised to any of them are *free and unmerited*; and that they can have no Fruition of God as their Blessedness and Reward, but by some *voluntary Condescension* on his Part, which he has been pleased to express by way of *Covenant*: As also, that he, whose Name is JEHOVAH, hath all Life, Glory, Blessedness and Goodness *in and of himself*, and stands not in need of any of his Creatures, nor derives any Glory from them. Therefore it is grossly erroneous in Mr. C ——— l to affirm as above, “That God can—
“ not but reward the Virtuous from Self-love.” Yea it is Blasphemy to him to affirm, “That our Happiness is advantageous to God’s Nature; and that
“ God’s Interests are not altogether independent on
“ us.” *Luke* 17. 10. and 12. 32. *Eph.* 2. 5, 8. *Rom.* 6. 23. *Job* 22. 2, 3. and 35. 7, 8. *Acts* 17. 24, 25. Confess. Chap. 2. Par. 1, 2. Chap. 7. Par. 1. Larg. Cat. Quest. 7. 30, and from Quest. 67. to 75. *inclusive*.

The General Assembly 1736 having had Mr. C ——— l’s Writings under their Consideration, in which he has vented the above Propositions, it is to be observed with Regrete, That “they find, with
“ respect to the third Article concerning Self-love,
“ he had declared he meant no more, but *that our*
“ Delight in the Glory and Honour of God is the
“ chief Motive of all virtuous and religious Actions;
“ and are of Opinion, that the examining and stating of the Matter, as has been done by the Com—
“ mittee

mittee for Purity of Doctrine, is sufficient for cautioning against the Errors that some at first supposed Mr. C——l was guilty of; and do appoint that the Matter rest here." From all which, compared with the Report of the *Committee*, taken into the Preamble of the Act, it is very manifest, that the Assembly have *adopted* this Proposition of Mr. C——l's, as in *their Opinion sound and orthodox*, viz. *That our Delight in the Glory and Honour of God is the chief Motive of all virtuous and religious Actions*. And that they have taken it up in the same Sense and Meaning of the Terms in which Mr. C——l, who delivered it, appears to have understood it, from his Explications then under Consideration, is as certain, as it is plain from the Act itself, that the Design of the Assembly and Committee, in hearing and considering this Declaration of Mr. C——l's, and the other Explications he offered, was, *To do something that was sufficient for cautioning against the Errors that some at first supposed he was guilty of*.

But the above *Proposition*, considered in a Relation to his Scheme of Principles, and his Explications then under Consideration, is manifestly gross and *erroneous*, and is very agreeable to the Scheme of *selfish Love* he has laid down in his *Enquiry*; as appears from his *Further Explications* and his *Remarks* on the Report of the Committee, which, together with this *short Declaration* of his Sentiments, were laid before the Assembly, as his *Defences* in the Charge laid against him. He concludes his *Defences* upon this Head in his *Further Explications* † as follows; " I hope the Reverend Committee will judge, that my Opinion about the Supreme Motive is in no Degree an Exclusion of the Glory of God from being our chief End; and that true Philosophy justifies my professing as I have done in my (first) Explications, That the Glory of God, or God in his glorious Perfections and Excellencies, is our chief and our ultimate End; and our prevailing Desire

L 2

" after

† *Further Expl.* 78, 79.

“ after Happiness in this Glory of God, or in God
 “ an infinite Good, the great Fountain of all Life
 “ and of all Perfection, is the supreme Motive that
 “ excites us, and that animates our vigorous Endeavours, to attain to Him.” And in his *Remarks on the Committee's Report*, Page 47. he asserts, “ That
 “ the Agent's Self-love, or a Man's own Happiness,
 “ is the Motive whereby he is excited to the Pursuit
 “ of such sort of (good or virtuous) Actions.”

The Matter stands briefly thus: The Assembly have *assailzied* Mr. C ——— l from the Charge of Error that some at first supposed he was guilty of, in respect that, as to the 3d Article concerning *Self-love*, he had declared he meant no more but that *our Delight in the Glory and Honour of God was the chief Motive of all virtuous and religious Actions*. But, if the Terms of this Proposition are considered, and compared with his *Defences* as above, it will be manifest, that, by the *Honour and Glory of God*, Mr. C ——— l does not understand the *Declarative* Glory of God, but God in his *glorious Excellencies and Perfections*, or God an *infinite Good*; and, by our *Delight in the Glory and Honour of God*, he understands our *prevailing Desire after Happiness* in this Glory of God, or in God an infinite Good: And, when he affirms that our Delight in the Honour and Glory of God is the chief Motive to all virtuous Actions, he understands, that the *Agent's Self-love*, or a Man's own Happiness in this Glory of God, or in God an infinite Good, is the *chief Motive* whereby he is excited to the Pursuit of religious and virtuous Actions; which is the *same Thing* with the Error that some at first supposed he was guilty of, viz. *That Self-love is the chief Motive to all such Actions*.

This might be further illustrate from what he says, Page 70. and 78. of his *Further Explications*, and p. 46. and 48. of his *Remarks*. But the Case is so plain of itself, and from what has been observed, that nothing is necessary to be added, except to lament that God has left this Church so far as to *adopt* this Error;
 and

and that he so far deserted some worthy Men, as not to notice it and testify against it, when it was done in a Way of *Protestation* for the Honour of Truth. It shall only be further observed on this Head, that no other Meaning can be imposed on the Proposition contained in Mr. C ———'s Declaration than what is above-represented; because, as he has not as yet renounced one Proposition in all his Writings, but defends every one of them, so it is manifest that he pleads, That, in eying God as our last End, we must consider him *merely as our chief Good*, or the Being who can fully satisfy our Self-love, and gratify all our Desires and Appetites. And he makes God's Benefits to us, or his promoting our Happiness, the only Ground and Reason of our loving and worshipping him. And he plainly asserts, That, "seeing God acts for his Self-interest, we cannot act from a higher Principle than our Self-interest." Yea, he confidently affirms, "That his Expressions on this Subject do not go higher than his Sentiments; and that his Sentiments do not go beyond the Nature of Things †."

A like Injury has been done to Truth by the Committee's judging, "That the Expressions objected against, are only *too high* on the Side of Self-love; particularly his asserting Self-love to be the sole Principle, Standard and Motive of all religious Actions:" And the Assembly's being of the Opinion, "That the Committee's thus stating the Matter is a sufficient Caution against Error," has thereby reduced his Sentiments concerning Self-love's being the sole Principle, Standard and Motive of all virtuous and religious Actions, to nothing else but to *too high Expressions on the Side of Self-love*; and *Error* being, in the Nature of the Thing, a *false Proposition* or Expression; and an *high Expression*, in common Language, being nothing else but a *Truth* set in a *strong Light*; hereby the important Truths of God, that relate

† See *Enquiry*, p. 429, 101, 102, 424, 389, 432. *Rep.* p. 58.

late to the Principle, Standard and Motive of our Actions, are left wounded and bleeding in our Streets.

2dly, Mr. C ——— l, in his *Discourse proving that the Apostles were no Enthusiasts*, has done manifest Indignity to the Work of the Holy Spirit upon the Souls of Men in their Regeneration and Conversion, in regard he affirms, “ That many in the World look upon these Manifestations which they think they have of the Nature and Excellencies of God, as supernaturally communicated to their Minds; and take these inward Ravishments they feel upon such pretended Revelations, to be all Divine Joys poured in upon them by the immediate Hand of God himself; and that it is evident beyond all reasonable Dispute, that all such Events may possibly have come about in a natural Course and Series of Things” (he makes no Exception of any, but such as are of the miraculous and extraordinary Kind) “ without any more immediate Interposing of the Divinity, than there is when a Man opens his Eyes and beholds the Sun in its Glory at Noon-day (a).” He affirms, “ That an extravagant Conceit of being peculiarly blest with such supernatural Communications from Heaven, makes up the very Life and Soul of Enthusiasm (b).” He describes the Enthusiast to be one, “ who, in the Course of his Devotion, keeps not within the Compass of Reason (c).” Whereby he makes *Human Reason*, in its present Situation, our *only Guide* in our Devotion. He also represents the Enthusiast to be one, “ who, in the Course of his Devotion, without attending to the Dictates of Reason, imagines himself to be under the immediate Influences of Heaven; and therefore concludes, that these Things which run strongly in his Mind, are immediately imprest upon him by the Divine Spirit (d).” And, in a ludicrous Manner, represents it as a Part of the Character of the Enthusiasts, “ That they
“ con-

(a) Disc. p. 2. (b) Disc. p. 4. (c) *Ibid.* (d) P. 26.

“ consult the Throne of Grace, lay their Matters
 “ before the Lord, and implore his Light and Dire-
 “ ction.” These and the like (says he) are *Terms*
of Art much used by them (e).

But the holy Scriptures expressly assert the *absolute*
Necessity of a *supernatural Work* of the *Holy Spirit*, for
 the *Renovation* of our *Natures*, and for manifesting
 unto us in a *saving Manner* the glorious Excellen-
 cies of God in the Person of Jesus Christ. This
 Work of the Spirit is common to all that are effe-
 ctually called, and they are every one peculiarly
 blessed with it: 2 Cor. 4. 6. and 5. 17. Ephes. 1. 17,
 18, 19. Psal. 119. 18. 2 Cor. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 2. 14.
 Ezek. 36. 26. Rom. 8. 7. Acts 26. 18. Ephes. 4. 18.
 Luke 6. 43. Also the *Will of God* revealed in his
 Word, and not our own *depraved Reason*, is that Rule,
 within the Compass of which we are to keep in our
 Devotion: Heb. 11. 1, 6. Isa. 8. 20. 2 Pet. 1. 19.
 1 Sam. 15. 21, 22, 23. Rom. 12. 2. Likewise the
 Scriptures affirm, That an *actual Influence* of the
Holy Spirit is necessary to enable us to walk with God
 in all the Duties of holy Obedience, and to impress the
 Truths of God upon our Minds: Rom. 8. 9, 14, 26,
 27. Philip. 2. 13. 2 Cor. 3. 5. John 16. 7, 8, 9, 14.
 John 15. 5. And that it is our Duty, Not to lean to
 our own Understanding, or Reason, but to consult the
 Throne of Grace, and to lay all our Matters before the
 Lord, and implore his Light and Direction: Prov. 3.
 5, 6. James 1. 5. Psal. 37. 23. Heb. 4. 14, 15,
 16. And in every Thing by Prayer and Supplication
 we ought to make our Requests known unto God, Philip.
 4. 6. It is also the received Doctrine laid down in
 our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, That a *su-*
pernatural Work of the *Holy Spirit* is *absolutely necessary*
 for enlightning our Minds *spiritually* and *savingly* to un-
 derstand the Things of God, Confess. Chap. 10. Par. 1.
 Larg. Cat. Q. 67. “ And tho’ nothing is at any
 “ Time to be added to the Scriptures, whether by
 “ new Revelations of the Spirit, or Traditions of
 “ Men

“ Men; yet the inward Illumination of the Spirit
 “ of God is necessary for the saving Understanding
 “ of such Things as are revealed in the Word,”
 Confess. Chap. 1. Par. 6. Also, it is the Doctrine
 of our *Confession*, agreeable to the Word of God,
 “ That the Light of Nature is not sufficient to give
 “ that Knowledge of God and of his Will which
 “ is necessary unto Salvation; which maketh the
 “ Word of God most necessary, being given by In-
 “ spiration of God, to be the only Rule of Faith and
 “ Life.” And therefore our corrupt and depraved
 Reason is not the Rule and Standard of our Devotion,
 Confess. Chap. 1. Par. 1, 2. Chap. 16. Par. 14.
 Larg. Cat. Q. 3. Less. Cat. Q. 2. And that good
 Works only are such as God hath commanded in his
 holy Word, and which proceed from a Heart purified
 by Faith, and are done in a right Manner according
 to the Word, and to a right End the Glory of God;
 and that our Works (or Duties of Obedience) as they
 are good, proceed from the Holy Spirit. That our
 Ability to do them is not at all of ourselves, but
 wholly from the Spirit of Christ; and that we may
 be enabled thereunto, besides the Graces that we
 have already received, there is required an actual
 Influence of the same Holy Spirit, to work in us
 to will and to do of his good Pleasure; and yet we
 are not hereupon to grow negligent, but to be
 diligent in stirring up the Grace of God that is
 in us, *Confess. Chap. 16. Par. 3, 5, 7. Chap. 19. Par. 7. Chap. 21. Par. 3, 4.*

The *General Assembly* having had Mr. *Campbell's*
 Writings under their Consideration, it is to be lamented
 that they have *entirely overlookt* the above, and
 such other gross Propositions in his *Book* concerning
Enthusiasm, whereby the supernatural Work of the
 Spirit of God upon the Souls of Men is reproached,
 and the serious Exercise of Godliness is ridiculed.

3dly, Mr. C ——— l in his Writings has likewise
 asserted, *That Men, without Revelation, cannot by their*
 Natu-

Natural Powers find out that there is a God (h). Which Proposition directly contradicts the holy Scriptures, in which we are taught, That the invisible Things of God, even his Eternal Power and Godhead, are understood and clearly seen from the Things that God hath made; and that these who are without Law, i. e. Revelation, have the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, and do by Nature the Things contained in the Law, their Consciences bearing Witness, and their Thoughts accusing or excusing one another. Which could not be, without some Knowledge and Persuasion of the Being of a God, of which they had natural Convictions and Impressions, as is plain from the Words of the Apostle just now mentioned: It is likewise evident from the Scriptures, that God by his Works had so clearly manifested his Being and Existence, his Wisdom, Power and Goodness, that the Idolatry of the Heathen was thereby rendered a Sin against the Light of Nature; and they were without Excuse, because they did not so improve that Light, which they had a natural Power and Ability to do, as to obtain more Knowledge and Veneration of their Creator, and the Author of their Being, according to the following Scriptures, Rom. 1. 19, 20. Rom. 1. 32. with 2. 1, 14, 15. Psal. 19. 1, 2, 3. Acts 17. 24, to 27. The above Propositions likewise overthrows the Doctrine laid down in our Confessions of Faith and Catechisms, which is as follows; "The very Light of Nature in Man, and the Works of God, declare plainly that there is a God; but his Word and Spirit only do sufficiently and effectually reveal him unto Men for their Salvation: That the Light of Nature sheweth that there is a God; who hath Lordship and Sovereignty over all, is Good, and doth Good unto all; and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all the Heart, and with all the Soul, and with all the Might; and, That the

M

" Light

(h) *Oratio*, p. 26, 27, 31, 32, 33, 34. *Enquiry*, Pref. p. 28, 29.

“ Light of Nature, the Works of Creation and
 “ Providence, do so far manifest the Goodness,
 “ Wisdom and Power of God, as to leave Man in-
 “ excusable.” *Confess. Chap. 21. Par. 1. Confess.*
Chap. 1. Par. 1. Larg. Cat. Q. 2.

And seeing the *Committee for Purity of Doctrine*
 were of Opinion, and that upon good Ground,
 “ That this Proposition is justly exceptionable, as
 “ tending to darken and render doubtful the Truth
 “ of Natural Religion, and as appearing not to
 “ agree with the Doctrine of the Apostle Paul, nor
 “ with the Doctrine of our *Confession of Faith* ;”
 There appears no Manner of Reason for the *Assem-*
bly's dismissing it, as it were only a doubtful *Expres-*
sion or Proposition, which may be construed in an er-
roneous Sense, however sound it may be in itself, or how-
ever well intended. By which Conduct of the As-
 sembly, the Cause of Truth hath suffered exceedingly,
 in regard that, by the above Proposition, the *first*
Principles of Natural Religion are attacked and sub-
 verted.

4thly, Further, Mr. C ——— l in his Writings has
 asserted, “ That the Laws of Nature in themselves
 “ are a certain and sufficient Rule to direct rational
 “ Minds to Happiness; and that our observing of
 “ these Laws is the great Mean and Instrument of
 “ our real and lasting Felicity (k).” Which Propo-
 sitions do evidently contradict the holy Scriptures,
 in which we are taught, That the *Word of God is the*
only Rule of Faith and Obedience; and that Men can-
not be accepted in God's Sight, nor be entitled to future
and lasting Felicity, by framing their Lives according
to the Law of Nature. And tho' Holiness be absolute-
 ly necessary to make us meet for Communion with
 God, both in Grace here, and in Glory hereafter;
 yet the *Righteousness of Christ*, or his Obedience and
 Satisfaction, imputed to us, and received and rested
 upon by Faith of the Operation of God, is the *great*
Mean of our Blessedness and Happiness, begun in
 Time,

(k) *Disc. Pref. p. 5, 6.*

Time, and consummate in Heaven, *Gal.* 3. 21, 22. and 6. 16. *Rom.* 8. 3. and 3. 20, 21. *Isa.* 42. 6. *Rom.* 10. 6, 9. *Gal.* 3. 11. *Acts* 4. 12. *John* 14. 6. *Eph.* 2. 12. *John* 17. 3. *John* 4. 22. *1 Cor.* 16. 22. *Gal.* 1. 6, 7, 8. *John* 3. 36. *Acts* 10. 43. and 16. 31. *Rom.* 3. 22, 23, to 28. and 5. 6, 7, 8. *2 Cor.* 5. 19, 21. *Eph.* 1. 7. *Philip.* 3. 7, 8, 9. And the above Propositions manifestly subvert the Doctrine laid down in our *Confession* of Faith and *Catechisms*, viz. "That
 " Man, by his Fall, having made himself incapable
 " of Life by the Covenant of Works, the Lord was
 " pleased to make a second, commonly called the
 " Covenant of Grace: That Men not professing the
 " Christian Religion, cannot be saved in any other
 " Way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to
 " frame their Lives according to the Light of Na-
 " ture: And that those whom God effectually calleth,
 " he freely justifieth, not for any Thing wrought in
 " them, or done by them, but by imputing the Obe-
 " dience and Satisfaction of Christ unto them, they
 " receiving and resting on him and his Righteous-
 " ness by Faith, which Faith they have not of them-
 " selves, it is the Gift of God, *Con.* Chap. 7th, Par.
 " 3. Chap. 10th, Par. 4. Chap. 11th, Par. 1. *Larg.*
 " *Cat.* Quest. 60, 73."

A very considerable Injury has been done to the Truths of God, by the Committee's making the above *Propositions* no other but *unguarded Expressions*; and by the *Assembly's* giving it as their Opinion, "That the Committee had so stated the Matter, as
 " is sufficient for Cautioning against the Errors that
 " some at first supposed Mr. C——l was guilty
 " of;" And their *dismissing* the said Propositions which were under their Consideration, as is done in the Close of their Act, as if they were only *doubtful Expressions* or Propositions, which may be construed in an erroneous Sense, however sound they may be in themselves, or however well intended; And this, notwithstanding it is most manifest from the Expressions themselves, and Connection of Purposes in the

Preface to his *Discourse*, in which he delivers these Propositions, and from the Relation they stand in to the Principles of the *Deists*, which he there proposes to refute, that he must be understood to speak of Mankind in their *present Situation*; and that he there, and in the very next *Page* to that, in which he lays down the above-mentioned Propositions, expressly pleads for the Necessity or *Fitness* of Revelation, only to give a sufficient Information of the Laws of Nature in their full Compass and Latitude, and of all Things necessary to work upon the Passions of Men, to engage them to pursue and observe them; And that in his *Enquiry*, Page 221. he asserts, that “The Sentiments of all fair and honest Enquirers do certainly agree in all important Points of Religion that are of common Concern, to which the common Parent of Mankind has proportioned the common Understanding of human Nature:” And that he has not yet confessed one Blunder or Impertinence, in the Way he has taken of managing the Arguments against the *Deists*, or the Concessions he has made them; or retracted any one of his Propositions or Expressions, but defends them all most keenly: And that any Declarations he has made, from which the *Assembly* and *Committee* would infer, that it is not his Meaning that a supernatural Revelation of a Saviour, and Faith in him, are superfluous, and not necessary to the Happiness of fallen Man (as to which Hereticks have been abundantly liberal, and with the greatest Cunning and Artifice, on Occasion of warping in their own Errors, or screening themselves from Danger) must necessarily be understood in an Agreeableness to, and Consistency with, all these other unsound Propositions, to which he tenaciously adheres. From all which it is very manifest, that these Propositions, as they are laid in his Writings, and were under the *Assembly’s* Consideration, are most dangerous, unsound and erroneous; and that the *Assembly*, by their Conduct in this Matter, have given a deep Wound to the Cause of Truth,
which

which cannot enough be regreted and lamented.
 5thly, Further, Mr. *Campbell* in his Writings has asserted, "That the *Apostles* do not seem to have
 " had any Notion of *our Saviour's* Divinity, at the
 " Time of his Crucifixion; and that they did not apprehend him under that Character, in which he
 " is represented to us by the Apostle *John* in the first
 " Chapter of his Gospel, and by *Paul* in his Epistles," before they began their publick Ministry, (a). That the Apostles, being "violently pre-
 " possessed in favour of a worldly Kingdom," look'd upon the carrying it on as the only End of the Messiah's Coming to the World; and "expected this
 " and this only from him (b)" And that the Apostles, in the Interval betwixt Christ's Death and Resurrection," were greatly offended at him in
 " their Hearts, as being, in their Opinion, a downright Cheat and Deceiver, who had once flattered them with mighty Hopes, but now had left
 " them under all the Agonies of Shame and Disappointment; and, That they all looked upon him as
 " an Impostor (c)."

All the above Propositions do directly contradict the holy Scriptures, in which it is expressly affirmed, That the *Disciples* and Followers of Christ beheld him in the Glory of his Divine Person; they beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only Begotten of the Father full of Grace and Truth; and that even while he dwelt among them, in the Days of his Humiliation, That they looked upon him to be the *Messiah*, the Son of the living God; a Discovery which *Flesh and Blood* (that is human Reason) had not made to them, but the *Father*: That they expected Heaven and eternal Life from him: That *Religious Worship* was claimed by him, and paid to him, while he tabernacled among them: That all the *Disciples* declared their Faith of his *Omni-science*; And that one of them, in Presence of all the rest, before they entred on their publick Ministry

(a) *Disc.* p. 31, 53. (b) *Disc.* p. 33, 53. and *Preface*, p. 22. (c) *Preface to Disc.* p. 21, 23.

Ministry, professed his Faith in him as *his Lord and his God*: And therefore it is most false and grossly erroneous to say, *That the Apostles had no Notion of our Lord's Divinity, before they began their publick Ministry; and that they expected nothing from him but a temporal Deliverance*, John 1. 14. Mat. 16. 16, 17. John 6. 68, 69. and 14. 1. Mat. 2. 2, 11. John 9. 35, to 38. John 16. 30. and 21. 17. and 20. 28. And the Scriptures likewise assert, *That our Lord Jesus Christ had manifested his Father's Name to his Disciples, that is, all the Purposes of his Grace, as centring in himself the Mediator: That they had received his Words, and knew thereby that he came out from the Father, and believed that the Father had sent him*, John 17. and that they considered their Lord as the *Messiah of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets, did write*, John 1. 41, 45. and that they looked upon him in the very *Interval* betwixt his Death and Resurrection, to be a *Prophet mighty in Deed and Word before God and all the People*, Luke 24. 19. and also, that the *Faith of none of them, no not of Peter, did fail*, Luke 22. 32. And therefore it is most false and grossly erroneous to say, that the *Apostles*, in the *Interval* betwixt Christ's Death and Resurrection, looked upon their Lord and Master as a *downright Cheat and Impostor*.

The above *Propositions* are likewise contrary to the Doctrine laid down in our *Confession of Faith and Catechisms*, viz. "That the Father, the Son and the
 " Holy Ghost, are the One only, Living, True and
 " Eternal God, the same in Substance, equal in
 " Power and Glory, *Con.* Chap 2. Par. 1, 3, *Larg.*
 " *Cat.* Quest. 9. That Christ the Mediator is very
 " God, and very Man, of one Substance and equal
 " with the Father; and that the Benefits of his Re-
 " demption were communicated unto the Elect, in
 " all Ages from the Beginning of the World, in and
 " by these Promises, Types and Sacrifices wherein
 " he was revealed, *Con.* Chap. 8. Par. 2. and Par. 6.
 " That these whom God hath effectually called, can
 " never

“ never totally fall away from the State of Grace,
 “ but shall certainly persevere therein to the End,
 “ *Con.* Chap. 17. Par. 1. And that, tho’ the Ca-
 “ tholick Church hath been sometimes more, some-
 “ times less visible, yet there shall be always a Church
 “ on Earth to worship God according to his Will,
 “ *Con.* Chap. 24. § 4, 5.

The Cause of Truth hath suffered exceedingly,
 and received a deep Wound from the *Assembly’s* gi-
 ving it as their Opinion, That the above *Sentiments*
 vented by Mr. C——l “ contain only his conje-
 “ ctural Opinion concerning the inward Sentiments
 “ of other Men; and that our Confession and Cate-
 “ chisms teach nothing concerning these Matters.”
 As also, that his Design was, “ to give the greater
 “ Strength to his Argument for vindicating the A-
 “ postles from Enthusiasm.” And their *dismissing*
 these gross and erroneous Propositions as *doubtful Ex-
 pressions only*, which may be construed in an errone-
 ous Sense, however sound they may be in themselves,
 and however well intended.

This their Conduct cannot be enough lamented,
 if it is considered, that the above Propositions are
 hereby purged of all Manner of Falshood or Un-
 soundness in themselves, seeing what is false in itself
 can give no Strength to an Argument; nor can it be
 the least Excuse for a Man’s venting unsound Propo-
 sitions, that he designed by them to give *Strength* to
 his Argument. That these Propositions contradict
 the *holy Scriptures*, has been shown in the above Pas-
 sages that have been cited; and this is enough to de-
 termine them to be *unsound* and erroneous: But, if the
Strain and general Design of the Scriptures is consi-
 dered, they may be said to *contradict the whole Word*
of God, as well as every Chapter of our *Confession* of
 Faith; for it is a Thing most certain, that if the
Apostles of Christ, who constantly attended his Mi-
 nistry, of whom the greatest Things are said of all
 others, as to their Proficiency by their Instruction,
John 17. 6, 7, 8. and to whom he *expounded all Things*
 pri-

privately, that he spoke openly in Parables; If these however had no Notion of his Divinity, and expected nothing but a temporal Deliverance from him, and, in the Interval betwixt his Death and Resurrection, look'd upon him as a Cheat and Impostor; no better Opinion can be justly maintained of any then living. And it may be given up to Mr. C ——— l, That one may be a true Believer (for such were all his Disciples except Judas) who doth not yet believe the Divinity of the Son of God; and consequently, that the Church may be constitute of a Company of Infidels under a Christian Name; which is very agreeable to the Socinian and Deistical Schemes. It may be likewise given up to him, That one may have a true and saving Faith, as the Disciples certainly had, and yet fall totally away from the same into the grossest Infidelity; for grosser cannot be imagined, than that all the Disciples should look upon their Lord as a downright Cheat and Impostor: Both which are contrary to the above Passages of the Confession, and the Scriptures these Articles are founded upon. And from Mr. C ——— l's above Principles it follows, that John 1. 14. and all the other Declarations and Confessions, that the Apostles in the Days of his Humiliation made, concerning their Faith of his True, Proper and supreme Deity, are nothing to the Purpose; and that no Argument can be drawn for the same, from any such Declarations and Confessions that are recorded in the four Gospels.

All the above-mentioned are some of the many dangerous Expressions and Propositions that ly scattered through Mr. C ——— l's Writings. And this Presbytery taking into their serious Consideration the Dishonour that is done to God, the Injury that is done to his Truths by all the *foresaid Propositions*; and also considering, that many may be in Danger of being tainted with the same in this Day of general Apostasy and Defection from the Truths of God: Therefore, and for all the several Grounds and Reasons above condescended upon, *They did and hereby do,*
CONDEMN all and every one of the *foresaid Propositions*

positions maintained and defended by the said Mr. C—l, as contrary to the Word of God, our Confession of Faith and Catechisms; particularly his affirming, That the sole and universal Motive to virtuous Actions is Self-love, Interest or Pleasure: That Self-love is the great Cause, or the first Spring of all our several Actions and Motions, which Way soever they may be directed; and that it is universally the first Spring in every rational Mind, that awakens her Powers, begins her Motions, and carries her on to Action; whereby the Vitals of practical Religion are attacked and undermined. Also; his asserting, That Self-love is the only Standard, Measure and Rule of all Virtue and Religion, and of all our several Actions and Motions; which Way soever they may happen to be directed; and, That Self-Interest or Pleasure is the only Standard by which we can judge of the Virtue, i. e. the Value and Goodness, of any Action whatsoever: That Moral Virtue flows from the essential Properties and Nature of Things: That God's Interests are not in all Respects independent on us: That our Happiness is advantageous to God's Nature; and, That Self-love determines God to be studious of our Good; and, That he cannot but reward the Virtuous, from Self-love. By all which; the Authority of God the Great Law-giver is disparaged; His Self-sufficiency is blasphemously impugned, and he is made a Debtor to his Creatures, being necessarily obliged to reward their Service and Obedience. Likewise his representing as Enthusiasts, all who pretend to have obtained supernatural Manifestations of the Nature and Excellencies of God; that are not of the extraordinary and miraculous Kind, and who imagine themselves in the Course of their Devotion to be under the Influences of Heaven; and that consulting the Throne of Grace, laying all our Matters before the Lord, and imploring his Light and Direction, are Terms of Art much used by Enthusiasts: By all which the Work of the holy Spirit on the Souls of Men in Effectual Calling, and the Spiritual Exercise of all such as are exercised to Godliness, are reviled, traduced

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and reproached. Also his affirming, That *Men cannot by their natural Powers, without the Aid of Revelation, find out that there is a God*: Whereby the first Principles of Natural Religion are wickedly attacked. Likewise his affirming, That *our observing of the Laws of Nature is the great Mean or Instrument of our real and lasting Felicity*; and that *the Laws of Nature in themselves are a certain and sufficient Rule to direct rational Minds to Happiness, however Revelation be fit or necessary to give sufficient Information of the Laws of Nature in their full Compass and Latitude, and of all Things necessary to work upon the Passions of Men to engage them to pursue and observe them*: Whereby the peculiar Truths of the Gospel, concerning the Person and Mediation of Christ, and the whole Work of the Spirit, are wickedly subverted; and such a Sufficiency is ascribed to Natural Religion, as gives up the Cause of Truth to Deists and Socinians. And likewise his affirming, That the *Apostles of our Lord, before his Resurrection, knew not his Divinity*; and that *they expected nothing from the Messiah but a worldly Kingdom or a temporal Deliverance*; and that, in the Interval betwixt his Death and Resurrection, *they look'd upon him as a Cheat and Impostor*: Whereby the Doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints is subtilly undermined, and the Arguments drawn for the Deity of the Son of God, from the Declarations and Confessions made by his Disciples in the Days of his Humiliation, are wholly enervate. And the PRESBYTERY did, and hereby do, declare, That all the above Propositions, Tenets and Principles, maintained and defended by Mr. C——l, are contrary, as said is, to the Word of God, and our Confession of Faith and Catechisms; and that they are gross, dangerous and pernicious Errors. And, in regard that the late General Assembly have neither censured the Broacher and Venter of the above dangerous Errors, nor condemned any one of them, but have dismissed the Process against him, by declaring, “ That the examining and stating of the Matter, as was done by
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the Committee for Purity of Doctrine, is sufficient for cautioning against the Errors that some at first supposed Mr. C ——— l was guilty of;" without giving any formal Judgment or Sentence upon the said Committee's Report: And, in regard the Committee in their said Report, and the Assembly in their Act and Sentence, declare that *they are satisfied, Mr. C ——— l has a sound Meaning* in the several Propositions they had under their Consideration; and particularly, that *they are satisfied with the Explication* he gave of the Article concerning Self-love, namely, That *he mean'd no more but that our Delight in the Glory and Honour of God was the chief Motive of all virtuous and religious Actions.* And this Proposition, now adopted by the Assembly, being the very same with Mr. C ——— l's above condemned Principle, that *Self-love is the greatest Cause or the first Spring of all our several Motions and Actions, which Way soever they are directed;* Therefore this Presbytery did, and hereby do, declare, for the Grounds and Reasons above condescended upon, That *the foresaid Propositions, adopted by the Assembly, is a gross and dangerous Error.* And this Presbytery likewise considering, That it is the Duty of the Judicatories of the Church to proceed in a regular Course of Process, and in the due Exercise of Discipline, against erroneous and heretical Seducers, according to the Rule and Direction given by the Apostle, *An Heretick after the first and second Admonition reject;* And, in regard the Assemblies of this Church have never put a Libel into the said Mr. C ——— l's Hands in order to reclaim him from the gross and dangerous Errors he has fallen into, or for rejecting and casting him out, if found obstinately adhering to his dangerous Principles and Tenets; Therefore they did and hereby do declare, That the whole Conduct of the last Assembly, in dismissing this Affair in the Manner above-narrated, is a deep Wound given to Truth, and a lamentable Step of Defection, and may be justly reckoned amongst the Signs, Grounds

and Causes of the Lord's Indignation against this whole Church and Land.

III. The Scripture Doctrine of this, and all the Reformed Churches, is subtilly undermin'd, and wickedly subverted, in a *Print* lately published, under the Title of *The Assembly's Shorter Catechism revised, and rendered fitter for general Use*: In regard the *Reviser*, by the several Omissions, Alterations and Additions he has thought fit to make in the *Assembly's Catechism*, not only shakes the Pillars of our Reformation from *Popery*, with respect to the *Scriptures* as the only Rule of Faith and Practice, and the Doctrines concerning Justification, the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper, and the just Desert of every Sin; but also boldly strikes at the whole Scheme of Divine Revelation contained in the said *Catechism*, by casting the same into such a Shape and Mould as is very agreeable to the *Deistical, Arian, Socinian* and *Arminian* Schemes. Hence the *Doctrines* taught in the *Assembly's Catechism*, concerning the holy Scriptures being the *only* Rule of Faith and Practice; concerning the Holy Trinity, and the Decrees of God; concerning the Covenants of Works and Grace, together with Original Sin and its Effects upon Mankind, and the Evil Nature and Desert of all Sin, as contrary to the Authority and Holiness of God: Also the Doctrines concerning the Person of Christ, his two distinct Natures and their personal Union; concerning the Nature, End and Design of his Sufferings as a real and proper Satisfaction to the Justice of God; concerning special Grace, and the peculiar and supernatural Energy of the Holy Spirit in the Application of the purchased Redemption in our Conversion and effectual Calling: Likewise the Doctrines concerning the Perseverance of the Saints, and the perpetual Obligation of the whole Moral Law; especially when the Obligation to Obédience is not derived by the *Reviser* from the Authority of God, as He is JEHOVAH, whose Perfections are infinite, and whose Dominion is over all, but only from the special

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and peculiar Benefits received from him; together with the Doctrine contain'd in the *Catechism* concerning the Regard that Christians should pay to the first Day of the Week as our Christian *Sabbath*: All these Scripture-doctrines concerning the above particular Heads, as they are plainly laid down in the *Catechism*, are subtilly and wickedly subverted by the *Reviser*. This PRESBYTERY would not have taken such particular Notice of the foresaid *Catechism revised*, were it not that the Scheme of Doctrine delivered in it is not only adapted, but very agreeable to the corrupt and depraved Taste of the present Age. And they cannot but observe it with Regrete, that reveal'd Religion is so much despised by many, and that the holy Scriptures are little regarded, and the Laws of Nature cry'd up as sufficient to direct Men to true Felicity and Blessedness; and the supernatural Operations of the Spirit, and his peculiar Energy in the Conversion of Sinners, are burlesqu'd: And many who profess some Regard to reveal'd Religion, according to the *Reviser's* Scheme, despise the Necessity, Truth and Excellency of the Satisfaction of Christ, and the Necessity of the Imputation of his Righteousness for our Justification in the Sight of God, together with the absolute Need there is of the Renovation of our Natures by supernatural Grace, and of a vital Union with Christ, in order to the bringing forth the Fruits of Holiness in Heart, Life and Conversation. Yea, these and the like Doctrines appear to be nauseous to not a few, whose Character and Profession obliges them to publish and recommend them; when, instead of the special and peculiar Doctrines of the Gospel, that concern the Person, Offices and Mediation of Christ, Salvation by the free Grace of God, and the supernatural Energy of his Spirit, Mens *sincere Endeavours* are, according to the *Reviser's* Scheme, cry'd up, either as concurring with the Spirit of God in Regeneration and effectual Calling, or as pre-existent Conditions unto the Application of the purchased Redemption; and the Ho-
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ly Spirit of God is only regarded as an Assistant and Help unto us in these our sincere Endeavours: Faith, Repentance, and what they call sincere Obedience, are preached as the Ground of our Right and Title to Life and Happiness; and, instead of enforcing Duties of Obedience to the Law from Gospel Principles and Motives, a Scheme of Morality is taught, which has *Self-interest* for its Principle and leading Motive, and that has little or no Respect to Christ as its Author and Ground of Acceptance, or to the Glory of God as its End.

IV. Altho' the above dangerous and pernicious *Errors* have been broached and are spreading through this Church and Land; yet the Standard of a plain and faithful Testimony has not to this Day been lifted up against them, for the Honour of Christ, and the Vindication of his injured Truth. This *sinful Negligence* and *Omission* of the Judicatories of this Church, in a Matter of such Importance, wherein the Honour of God, the Glory of the Redeemer, the Maintenance and Preservation of the Purity of Doctrine, and consequently not only the Souls of the present, but also of the rising Generation, are all so deeply interested and concerned, may be reckoned *one of the most grievous and weighty Grounds and Causes of the Lord's Indignation and Wrath against this whole Church and Land*: As for Instance, When Reports were spread at first concerning Mr. *John Simson* his teaching and venting Error, the late Reverend and Worthy Mr. *James Webster* having taken Notice of the same in the Presbytery and Synod whereof he was a Member, and they refusing to give their Concurrence therein, he tabled the Affair before the *General Assembly* 1714, desiring them to take Trial thereof as their proper Province; But the said *Assembly* were so far from assisting him in this Matter, that they appointed the said Mr. *James Webster*, or any who will join with him in charging Mr. *John Simson* Professor of Divinity at *Glasgow* with Error, to table their Complaint before the Presbytery where
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he lives, allowing any Person or Persons, who are willing, to give Mr. *Webster* Assistance in Point of Form; but declaring, that, if they engage with him in that Cause, they shall be accounted Libellers (r). Accordingly, Mr. *Webster* having libelled Mr. *Simson* before the Presbytery of *Glasgow*, and the said Mr. *Simson* having given in his subscribed Answers and Defences, wherein are contained the above-mentioned dangerous and erroneous Propositions, the *Process* was brought before the *Assembly* 1715, who appointed a *Committee* to take Trial of the Case, continuing the Load and Weight of the Prosecution upon Mr. *Webster* as the Party pursuing and accusing. In like Manner the *Assembly* 1716 continued the *Process* in the same Channel, till it was concluded by the *Assembly* 1717, who instead of condemning particularly the gross and dangerous Errors owned by Mr. *Simson*, and inflicting due Censure upon him, did not so much as rebuke him for venting the same; altho' they were so far convinced of the Truth of the Libel against him, that by their Act they find, "That he
 " had vented some Opinions not necessary to be
 " taught in Divinity, and that had given more Oc-
 " casion to Strife than to the promoting of Edifica-
 " tion; and that he had used some Expressions that
 " bear, and are used by Adversaries in, an unsound
 " Sense; and that he had adopted some Hypotheses,
 " different from what are commonly used among or-
 " thodox Divines, that are not evidently founded on
 " Scripture, and tend to attribute too much to na-
 " tural Reason and the Power of corrupt Nature;
 " which undue Advancement of Reason and Nature
 " is always to the Disparagement of Revelation and
 " efficacious free Grace: Therefore they prohibite
 " and discharge the said Mr. *Simson* to-use such Ex-
 " pressions, or to teach, preach, or otherwise vent
 " such Opinions, Propositions, or Hypotheses as
 " aforesaid." This extensive Lenity, or rather sin-
 " ful Remissness and Slackness, in not inflicting due
 Censure

(r) See *Index* of unprinted Acts of *Assembly* 1714.

Censure upon one who had given such evident Discoveries of his corrupt and erroneous Principles, and whom it was unsafe to trust any more with the Education of Youth for the holy Ministry, encouraged him to go on in venting and teaching his pernicious Errors, till at length, in a Way of righteous Judgment from the Lord on this sinful and lukewarm Church, he is so far left of God, as to attack and impugn the *Supreme Deity* of the *Great God our Saviour*. And tho' it was found clearly proven by the several Assemblies; who had this Process under their Consideration, That he had vented and taught the above-mentioned Propositions, whereby he attempted to *divest the Son of God* of his true and supreme Deity, and thereby blasphem'd that *Name which is above every Name*; yet the Concern of this Church for this *Foundation-truth* did rise no higher than a bare *Suspension* of the *Blasphemer* from teaching and preaching, and the Exercise of any Ecclesiastical Power or Function, leaving the Door open to another Assembly to relax him from the said Sentence. In like Manner, during the Dependence of the fore said Process, the *Committee* of Assembly found it clearly proven, that he had contraveen'd the Injunction of Assembly 1717, in venting the dangerous Errors which they had discharged him to teach; yet the *Assembly* 1729 concluded the Process against him, without taking any Notice of these gross Errors. And tho' there is just Ground to fear that too many are tainted with them, whereby the Purity of Doctrine is in the greatest Danger; yet no Regard is had to these Things, but all is pass'd over by our Assemblies since that Time with a profound Silence: Except what was done by the Assembly 1736, in their *Act concerning Preaching*, wherein several weighty and important Truths are asserted, and several necessary and seasonable Directions are given both to Ministers and Preachers; yet the many gross and dangerous Errors, vented and taught by Mr. *Simson*, are never particularly condemn'd, neither is there any plain and faithful

Warning

Warning emitted against them. Also the foresaid Assembly, in dismissing Mr. *Campbell's* Affair by an After-act in the Manner that is already observed, have so far enervate and weakned their own Act about Preaching, that the good Effects thereof, which otherwise might have been hop'd for; cannot be now expected.

The above Omission of our *General Assemblies* concerning Doctrine must be reckoned the more culpable, in regard they have been frequently addressed by Representations and Instructions from Synods and Presbyteries, and also from Ministers and Elders and People through the Land, representing the Necessity of a particular Condemnation of the several dangerous Errors and Blasphemies vented by Mr. *Simson*; and that a solemn Warning might be emitted, discovering the evil and dangerous Tendency of the same; yet nothing of this Kind is done. And tho' it be a Debt which one Generation owes to another, to transmit the Truths of God in their Purity to Posterity, and to deliver off their Hand to the rising Generation, these Truths that are particularly assaulted and opposed, with some more peculiar and solemn Testimony unto them; yet injured Truth continues to ly wounded and bleeding in our Streets, without Justice done her by the Church-representative, to whom it belongs in a special Manner to publish and declare, to uphold and defend all the Truths of God delivered in his Word, against open and avowed Enemies, or secret Underminers of the same: And therefore the above sinful Omission must needs be reckoned an Injury done to Truth, an Injustice done to our Posterity, and of a very dangerous Tendency towards the hardning of such as may be tainted with the above Errors, as well as opening a Door for the spreading of this corrupt Leaven among others.

Besides the above-mentioned pernicious *Errors*, which like a Flood have overspread this Church, particularly since our Deliverance from the late unnatural and wicked *Rebellion*, and which were never
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the Sin nor Trial of the Church of *Scotland* in any of our former Periods of Apostasy and Defection: our Declinings and Backslidings have increased since that Time, by the several dangerous Thrusts and Wounds we have given with our own Hands to our Presbyterian Church Government and Discipline, whereby our Ruin and Destruction, if Mercy prevent not, is like to proceed from ourselves; of which the following particular Instances are offered:

1. No due Caution and Care has been taken in *licensing* young Men as *Probationers* for the holy Ministry, nor a suitable Regard had to the Qualifications required in the Scriptures and Acts of our General Assemblies, of such as are to be employed in preaching the Gospel. Hence it is come to pass, that many have been licensed, who, by their general and loose *Harangues* in the Pulpit, discover their Ignorance of Christ and him crucified, and their Estrangement from the Power of Godliness, while there is as little of Christ to be found in their Sermons as in the Systems of Heathen Morals.

2. The *corrupt* and *undue Entry* of many into the holy Ministry, is another of the publick Sins and epidemick Evils of the present Time: The *Acceptance of Presentations* has become fashionable for several Years bypast; and, instead of giving a *Cheque* to this corrupt Course and Practice, the Judicatories of the Church have so far encouraged the same, that the Settlement of *Presentees* has been appointed, when almost the whole Parish was *dissenting* and *reclaiming*, contrary to the Word of God, and the laudable Acts and Constitutions of this Church founded thereon: yea, Settlements have been appointed in a very arbitrary Manner over dissenting Congregations, even when there was no Presentation in the Case: And when *Presbyteries* concerned have refused to proceed to such violent Settlements, *Committees* have been appointed by the *Commission*, and invested with a Presbyterial Power to try and ordain Men to the holy Ministry. And likewise many Congregations thro

the Land are still groining under the Weight of such arbitrary and violent Intrusions; and neither the *Intruded*, nor such as have had an active Hand in the Intrusion, give any Evidence to this Day of their Repentance and Sorrow for the Violence they have done to the Flock and Heritage of God, who are thereby scattered and broken.

3. The *Conduct* of the *General Assemblies* of the Church has not been *equal* and *impartial* in Matters of Doctrine; as for Instance, in the Case of Mr. *John Simson*: The Processes carried on against him were kept several Years in Dependence before the Judicatories; and particularly the last Process, which concerned his impugning the *Supreme Deity of the Son of God*, was transmitted to the several Presbyteries of this Church by the Assembly 1728, that their Judgment might be reported to the ensuing Assembly about the *Censure* that was due to the said Mr. *Simson*, tho' the Evidence was so clear, that the Discipline of the Church should have been *summarily* exercised upon him. But the General Assembly 1720 condemned a Bundle of Propositions containing *important Matters of Doctrine*, when the Affair had been under the Consideration *only* of *two* different Meetings of that Assembly, and a Committee of the whole House. This very *sudden Step* of the said Assembly occasioned a *Representation* to be given in to the Assembly 1721, by several Ministers of this Church, bearing, That it appeared to them, that many Gospel-truths were wounded by the foresaid *condemnatory* Act and Sentence; and the Assembly 1722 saw themselves obliged to *explain* and declare their Minds at length concerning these important Doctrines then upon the Field, in the Terms and Expressions used in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms: But still a *Wound* was given to Truth by the Act of the foresaid Assembly 1720 relating to Doctrine; particularly by their *condemning* as *erroneous* the two following Propositions, *That, as the Law is the Covenant of Works, Believers are wholly and altogether set free from*

it; and, *That Believers are set free both from the commanding and condemning Power of the Covenant of Works.* Tho' both these Propositions are evident from the Word of God, and expressly contained in our *Confession* of Faith, Chap. 7. § 19. and *Larg. Cat. Quest. 91.* yet the said Assembly thought fit *summarily* to condemn them. As this sudden and precipitant Stroke at that spiritual Freedom and Liberty, wherewith the Son of God hath made his People free, could not but be affecting to many Ministers and Christians thro' the Land, as well as to the foresaid Ministers; so the Assembly 1722 found themselves obliged to declare, "That it is a precious Gospel-truth, That Believers are free from the Law as it is a Covenant of Works." Yet it is Matter of Regrete, that the Credit of Acts of Assembly is so much stood upon, that the Assembly 1722 did not *repeal* that Act and Deed of the Assembly 1720, whereby what they *themselves* own'd to be a *precious Truth* is in express Terms condemned.

4. Several *arbitrary Acts and Decisions* have been framed and passed by the General Assemblies of this Church, whereby the Government of the House of God has been undermined, and the Discipline sinfully perverted; such as the *Act of Assembly 1732*, concerning the Planting of vacant Churches, which lodges the decisive Power of electing Ministers in a conjunct Meeting of Elders and Heritors, no other Qualification being required of the said Heritors, but their being *Protestants*, however much disaffected to the Government both in Church and State. Again, the Assembly 1733 rebuked and admonished Mr. *Erskine* at their Bar, for impugning several Acts of Assemblies and Proceedings of Church-judicatories, in his Sermon at the Opening of the Synod of *Perth and Stirling*, that is, for testifying against the Act of Assembly 1732, and other violent Proceedings of Judicatories at that Time. And when *he*, with other *three Ministers*, *protested* against the said Sentence for
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their own just and necessary Exoneration, high Censures were threatned, and actually inflicted upon them, because they had not Freedom to retract their Protestation, and profess their Sorrow for the same, as required by the said Assembly; whereby *two sinful and unwarrantable Terms* of Ministerial Communion were imposed: First, *That no Minister of this Church should testify from the Pulpit against Acts of Assembly and Proceedings of Church-judicatories, even tho' they were such as had a direct Tendency to undermine our Constitution.* Secondly, *That no Minister or Member of this Church should PROTEST for their own Exoneration against Acts, Sentences or Decisions of the Supreme Judicatory, even tho' they should nearly affect the publick Cause of God, and restrain Ministerial Freedom and Faithfulness* (as was the present Case) *in testifying against the Sins and Defections of a backsliding Church.* Further, the said Assembly, by another Act discharging the Ministers of the Presbytery of Dunfermline, under Pain of the highest Censure, to admit any of the Parish of Kinross to Sealing Ordinances without the Permission of the present Incumbent, who was intruded upon them, imposed *another sinful Term* of Ministerial Communion upon the Ministers of this Church; whereby *they are bound up from dispensing Sealing Ordinances, under Pain of the highest Censure, to such of the Lord's People as have not Freedom to submit to the Ministry of Intruders:* And thereby likewise imposed a new and unwarrantable *Term of Christian Communion*, when all such as cannot own *Intruders* to be their lawful Pastors, are *actually excommunicated* from Sealing Ordinances; which is a plain homologating of a Piece of Tyranny which was exercised in the former *persecuting Period*, this being one of the Grounds of Peoples withdrawing from *Prelatick Incumbents*, that they were intruded upon them without their Call or Consent.

5. Tho' the Assembly 1734 did repeal the Act of Assembly 1732 anent the Settlement of Ministers, yet the said Act was not condemned as contrary to the Word

Word of God, and the Constitutions of this Church, contained in her Books of Discipline, and Acts of former Assemblies; particularly Act of Assembly at Glasgow 1638, *discharging any Person to be intruded in any Office of the Kirk, contrary to the Will of the Congregation to which they are appointed.* And tho' some Stop was put by the foresaid Assembly to the violent Measures and Proceedings of some former Assemblies and their Commissions; yet the *Act of Assembly 1733, restraining Ministerial Freedom and Faithfulness,* and *censuring* the Ministers and Members of this Church for *protesting* for their own Exoneration against such *Decisions* of the *General Assembly* as are prejudicial to the Cause and Interest of Christ in this Land, *stands to this Day unrepealed*; as also, the *Act* of the same *Assembly* with Reference to the *Presbytery of Dunfermline, excommunicating* both Ministers and Members of this Church, in Case they do not either concur with, or submit to the Ministry of Intruders. Nor is it an Apology for a sinful Act or Decision, whereby a Church is involved in the Guilt of transgressing the Ordinances and Institutions of the Lord, that there is a *Connivance* at the contrary Practice.

6. All the above-mentioned Steps of Defection and Apostasy are followed with many evident Signs and Causes of the Lord's Departure; such as abounding Profanity, Impiety, and the vilest Immoralities of all Sorts, wherewith *the Land is greatly polluted*: The profane Diversions of the *Stage*, together with *Night Assemblies* and *Balls*, these sinful Occasions of Wantonness and Prodigality, are encouraged and countenanced in the most considerable Cities of the Nation. Likewise an *idolatrous Picture* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was well received in some remarkable Places of the Land: And tho' Popish Errors and Delusions abound more and more, and the abominable Idolatry of the *Mass* is openly frequented in many Corners of this Land, yet no proper nor effectual Remedies are applied against this growing Evil; and particularly, Church-discipline is not duly exercised

exercised against Papists, according to former laudable Acts and Constitutions of this Church: And of late the *penal Statutes* against *Witches* have been repeal'd, contrary to the express Letter of the Law of God, *Exod. 22. 18. Thou shalt not suffer a Witch to live. Deut. 18. 10, 11, 12. There shall not be found among you any One that maketh his Son or his Daughter to pass through the Fire, or that useth Divination, or an Observer of Times, or an Inchanter, or a Charmer, or a Consulter with familiar Spirits, or a Wizard, or a Necromancer. For all that do these are an Abomination to the Lord: And because of these Abominations, the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.* Also the common Impressions of God are in a great Measure worn off the Spirits of Men; the Power of Religion is daily decaying thro' the Land; the very Form of it is despised by many, and rested upon by others, which is occasioned by the general Contempt of the Gospel, and neglecting the *great Salvation* brought near therein to Sinners of all Sorts: Upon which account the Lord is provoked to withdraw in a great Measure from his own Ordinances, and to restrain the gracious Influences of his Holy Spirit; whereby Multitudes, under the Means of Grace, are lying scattered like *dry Bones about the Grave's Mouth*. A sad Evidence of the Departure of a Spirit of Prayer and Mourning for our own Sins, and the *Abominations that are done in the Midst of us*; especially when it is considered, that a dreadful Spirit of Security, Deadness and Indifferency prevails among all Ranks of Persons, notwithstanding of the many evident Symptoms of the Lord's Anger and Displeasure gone forth against us. Our *Nobility and Barons*, who have sometimes appeared with an Heroick Zeal and Resolution for maintaining and advancing a Work of Reformation, have generally *turst the Lord's Bonds asunder and have cast his Cords from them*, insomuch that the very Form of Family-worship is either despised or neglected by the most Part of them. Our *Burgesses and Commons*, who

who have made a zealous Profession of the Truths of the Gospel, for the most Part *know not the Way of the Lord, nor the Judgments of their God.* The *Ministers* in the House of God, who have sometimes set the *Trumpet* to their Mouth, and *shown to the House of Jacob their Sin* and their Transgression, are under a more than ordinary Restraint of the Spirit of God; and he that speaks against the Evils of this degenerate Day, *makes himself a Prey.* Every one of us in many, if not in all the above particular Instances, are some Way or other deeply involved in the Provocation; the Sun is gone down upon us, *We do not behold our Signs, and there is not a Prophet; nor any that know the Time how long.* It may be mentioned with Regrete, that, in the two several *Acts for National Fasting*, appointed by the late *Commissions*, there is no particular Searching into the Grounds and Causes of the Lord's Indignation and Controversy against this Church and Land, in former and present Times; There is no Mention made of the ruining Acts and Constitutions above-named, nor of the sinful Silence of Judicatories, in omitting a faithful Testimony against the growing and spreading Errors of the Times; nor of the Injuries done to the Heritage and Flock of God, by the violent Intrusions that have been made upon them, which have raised a Cry of Violence and Oppression from all Corners of the Land; a Cry is gone up to Heaven, even to his Ears who hath said, *For the Oppression of the Poor, for the Sighing of the Needy, now will I arise, I will set him in Safety from him that puffeth at him.* When the Sins of the present Times are not particularly mourned over, it cannot be expected that there will be any faithful Inquiry into, or Acknowledgment of, the Defections and Backslidings of former Periods; for which we have just Ground to apprehend, that the Lord may pursue a Quarrel and Controversy against *sinful, Gospel-despising and Covenant-breaking Scotland*: Yea, instead of acknowledging the Sins and Defections of the present Times, these

these who have had an active Hand in them, continue to justify their Abominations, and, by the whole of their Conduct and Behaviour, declare, That they only want an Opportunity to re-act the same Scene of Oppression and Tyranny, and to compleat what they had begun, and in a great Measure carried on, even the Ruin of any Remains of a Covenanted Reformation among us: Yea, such of the Ministry as are weighted and grieved with the above and the like Backslidings and Declinings, have not that Courage and Resolution to appear in the present Judicatories, which the Providences and Circumstances of the Day and Time call for. Hence, notwithstanding of the Stop that was put to former violent Proceedings by the Assembly 1734; yet, instead of carrying on Reformation, a visible Fainting and Declining seems to take Place in the present Judicatories of the Church, of which many Instances might be given; such as their proceeding no further than the Sentence of the *Lesser Excommunication* against one Mr. Nimmo, Student in Divinity, who, in March 1735, in a publick Discourse in the *Divinity-Hall* of *Edinburgh*, made an insolent and blasphemous Attack upon the whole of Divine Revelation, when no less Censure than that of the *Higher Excommunication*, summarily pronounced, could have been justly reckoned a sufficient Testimony against such bold and daring Wickedness, which, in all its Circumstances, had never its Parallel in this Land. Likewise the Assembly that met foresaid Year, appointed a Call to be moderate for the *Presentee* to the Parish of *Car-ridden*, exclusive of any other. And the *Synod* of *Perth and Stirling*, upon the Remit of the Affair made by the same Assembly unto them, concerning the *Inrolment* of the *Intruder* into the Parish of *Muckhart*, instead of censuring him for his scandalous Intrusion, have taken him into their Bosom, and given him the Right-hand of Fellowship, by *inrolling him as one of their Number*, tho' he was never inrolled by the *Presbytery*, who have the more immediate In-

specification of that Parish: And, tho' they reclaimed against the Inrolment, and severals of them dissented from that Deed of the Synod; and tho' the Assembly 1736 in their 14th Act declare, "That it is, " and has been since the Reformation, the Principle " of this Church, that no Minister shall be intruded " into any Parish, contrary to the Will of the Congregation:" Yet, in Contradiction thereunto, they themselves appointed the Presbytery of *Stirling* to proceed to the Settlement of a Presentee to the Parish of *Denny*, tho' the whole Elders and the Body of the People are dissenting and reclaiming; and likewise they appointed the Synod and Presbytery of *Dumfries* to inroll the Intruder into the Parish of *Traquair*," as a Member of the respective Judicatories, to support him in his Ministry, and to endeavour to bring the People of that Parish to submit to it." These are sad Evidences, that, instead of being duly affected with our Backsliding and Defection, we *sigh and go backward*, yea, we *refuse to return*.

The above-mentioned Particulars are some Instances of the gradual Declinings and Backslidings of this Church and Land (besides the doctrinal Errors already condemned) most of which have taken Place betwixt the late *unnatural Rebellion* and this present Time, and which this Presbytery judge it their Duty to testify against: Therefore, and for all the Reasons and Grounds above particularly condescended upon, they did, and hereby do, *condemn*, as contrary to the Word of God and the Covenanted Principles of this Church, all and every one of the Steps of Defection above-narrated, and they did, and hereby do, declare, That they are amongst the Causes and Grounds of the Lord's righteous Quarrel and Controversy with this whole Church and Land, for which all Ranks of Persons have Reason to humble themselves before a righteous and holy God.

But in regard it is necessary for the Maintenance and Vindication of Truth, not only to condemn the parti-

particular Steps of Declining and Backsliding which a Church and Land may be guilty of; but also to publish, declare and *assert* the *Truths* which are controverted, opposed or assaulted, whether they concern the Doctrine, Worship, Government or Discipline of the House of God; and particularly, considering the bold Attempts that have been made upon the whole *Doctrine* of this Church, contained in the holy Scriptures and her Confession of Faith founded thereupon, by the foresaid Mr. *Simson* and Mr. *Campbell*, and by the foresaid *Print*, intituled, *The Assembly's Catechism revised*: Therefore the Ministers associate in Presbytery do judge it a Duty necessarily incumbent on them, in the *Situation* wherein adorable Providence has placed them as a *Judicatory*, and *as now met in Presbytery*, and constitute in the Name and Authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, the alone Head of his Church, *judicially* to *acknowledge, declare and assert* the Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline of this Church, in *Opposition* to the several Steps of Defection and Deviation therefrom.

Likeas, the *Presbytery did, and hereby do, acknowledge, declare and assert*, That the Light of Nature and the Works of Creation and Providence, without the Aid of Tradition or Revelation, shew *that there is a God*, who hath Lordship and Sovereignty over all: As also, That thereby his Wisdom, Power and Goodness are so far manifested, that all Men are left inexcusable; according to the Doctrine held forth from the Word of God in our Confession of Faith, Chap. 1. § 1. Chap. 21. § 1. And they hereby *reject and condemn* all contrary Principles and Tenets that are maintained by Mr. *Campbell*, the *Socinians* and others.

In like Manner, they acknowledge, declare and assert, That the Word of God, contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, is not only a *sufficient* Rule, or the *principal* Rule, but that it is the *only* Rule to direct us, *how* we ought to glorify

rify God, and enjoy him; and that “ The Authority
 “ of the holy Scripture, for which it ought to be
 “ believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the Te-
 “ stimony of any Man or Church, but wholly upon
 “ God (who is Truth itself) the Author thereof;
 “ and therefore it is to be received, because it is the
 “ Word of God.” And that “ The supreme
 “ Judge, by which all Controversies of Religion are
 “ to be determined, and all Decrees of Councils,
 “ Opinions of ancient Writers, Doctrines of Men,
 “ and private Spirits are to be examined, and in whose
 “ Sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the
 “ Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture;” accord-
 ing to *Confession*, Chap. 1. § 4, 10. and the *Answer*
 to the third Question in the *Larger*, and the second
 Question in the *Shorter Catechism* with the Scriptures
 cited: And they hereby *reject* and *condemn* all Deisti-
 cal, *Socinian* and *Popish* Errors, contrary to, or in-
 consistent herewith.

Likewise, they hereby acknowledge, declare and
assert, That the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son
 of God by ineffable, incomprehensible and necessary
 Generation, is JEHOVAH, the Most high God, Self-
 existent and Independent; and that he is necessarily
 existent; and that the Terms, Necessary Existence,
 Supreme Deity, and the Title of the Only true God,
cannot be taken in a Sense that includes the personal
 Property of the Father, but belong to the *Son* and
Holy Ghost equally with the *Father*; and that the
 Three Persons of the adorable Trinity are *numerically*
One in Substance or Essence, equal in Power and in
 Glory; according to the Doctrine held forth from
 the Word of God in our *Conf.* Chap. 2. § 3. and the
Answer to the *Question* in the *Larger* and *Shorter*
Catechism, *How many Persons are there in the God-*
head? and the *Answer* to the Question in the *Lar-*
ger Catechism, *How doth it appear that the Son and*
the Holy Ghost are God equal with the Father? And
 they hereby *reject* and *condemn* all contrary Principles
 vented by Mr. *Simson*, and all other *Arian*, *Socinian*
 and

and *Sabellian* Tenets contrary to the above Doctrine, or inconsistent therewith.

Also, they acknowledge, declare and assert, That God has, from all Eternity, by the most wise and holy Council of his own Will, freely and unchangeably decreed and ordained whatever comes to pass in Time; and particularly, that he hath predestinated some of Mankind unto eternal Life before the Foundation of the World was laid, and according to his eternal and immutable Purpose, and the Council and good Pleasure of his own Will *allenarly*; and that they who are thus predestinated, are chosen unto everlasting Glory out of his mere free Grace and Love, without any Foresight of Faith, good Works, or Perseverance in either of them, or any other Thing in them, as Conditions, or Causes moving him thereto, and all to the Praise of his glorious Grace; according to the Doctrine held forth from the Scriptures, *Confess. Chap. 3. § 1, 5.* And they hereby reject and condemn all contrary Principles contain'd in the *Assembly's Catechism revised*, and all other *Pelagian* and *Arminian* Errors inconsistent herewith.

Likewise, they declare, acknowledge and assert, That, when God created Man, he entred into a Covenant with him, wherein Life was promised upon Condition of his perfect and personal Obedience; and that in this Covenant (commonly called the Covenant of Works) the *first Adam* stood in the Capacity of a *Publick Covenant-head and Representative* unto all his Posterity; and that, by Reason of his Breach of this Covenant, all Mankind descending from him by Ordinary Generation, sinned in him their Head and Representative, and fell with him in his first Transgression; and this his Sin is *truly* and *justly* imputed to them every one; and that, upon account of this Sin imputed, all Infants descending from *Adam* by ordinary Generation, *want* that original Righteousness wherewith *Adam* was created, and are by *Nature Children of Wrath*, according to *Confess. Chap. 6. § 3, 4, 6. Chap. 7. § 2. and Larg. Cat.*

Q. 20, 22, 25, and 27. *Short. Cat.* Q. 12, 16. and the Scriptures cited. And they hereby reject and condemn all contrary Tenets maintained by Mr. *Simson*, and the *Reviser* of the Assembly's *Catechism*, and all other Principles contrary to, or inconsistent herewith.

Likewise, they acknowledge, declare and assert, That Man, by his Fall into a State of Sin, is wholly dead in Trespases and Sins, and hath wholly lost all Ability of Will to any spiritual Good accompanying Salvation; and that Man in a natural State being Enmity against God, and averse from all spiritual Good, is not able by his own Strength to convert himself, or prepare himself thereto; and consequently, that there is no necessary nor certain *Connection*, either in the Nature of Things, or by any Divine Promise, between the *morally serious Endeavours* of Man in a natural State, and the obtaining special or saving Grace; according to the Doctrine held forth from the Scriptures, *Confess. Chap. 9. § 3. Chap. 10. § 2, 3.* And they hereby reject and condemn all opposite Principles maintained by Mr. *Simson*, and all *Arminian* Errors inconsistent herewith. Notwithstanding they assert, That it is the Duty of all, and every one, to give diligent Attendance upon the Ordinances of Divine Institution and Appointment, particularly the *Reading and Hearing* of the Word and Prayer, these being the ordinary Means by which converting and quickning Grace is communicated to such as are dead in Trespases and Sins; according to *Larg. Cat. Q. 153. 154. and Short. Cat. Q. 85. and 88.*

Also, they acknowledge, declare and assert, That the *Light of Nature* is not sufficient to give that Knowledge of God and of his Will, which is necessary to Salvation; and therefore they who do not profess the Christian Religion cannot be saved, be they never so diligent to frame their Lives according to the Light of Nature, and the Law of that Religion they do profess; according to *Confess. Chap. 1. § 1. and Chap. 10. § 4. Larg. Cat. Q. 60.* And they condemn all *Socinian* or other Tenets inconsistent therewith in the *foresaid Catechism revised*; and particularly

larly Mr. *Simson's* erroneous Doctrine concerning an obscure Revelation and Offer of Grace made to all without the Church; and Mr. *Campbell's* erroneous Opinion, That the Laws of Nature are, in themselves, a certain and sufficient Rule to direct rational Minds to Happiness; and that our observing of these Laws is the great Mean and Instrument of our real and lasting Felicity.

Further, they acknowledge, declare and assert, That the second Person of the adorable Trinity did, in the Fulness of Time, assume the Human Nature into a personal Union with his Divine: That he took to him a true Body and a reasonable Soul, being conceived by the Power of the Holy Ghost in the Womb of the Virgin *Mary*, and born of her, yet without Sin: and that he is *very God and very Man*, in two Distinct Natures and one Person for ever; according to *Confess. Chap. 8. § 2.* and the Scriptures cited. And they hereby reject and condemn all *Nestorian* and *Sabellian* Principles and Tenets, contrary to, or inconsistent herewith, whether vented in the fore said *Catechism revised*, or other erroneous Treatises of that Kind.

Further, they acknowledge, declare and assert, That the Eternal Son of God, who was *made manifest in the Flesh*, did in our Nature, as the *second Adam*, the publick Head and Representative of Elect Sinners, and the undertaking Surety for them, yield a perfect Obedience to the Law as a Covenant of Works, in the Room and Stead of Elect Sinners; and that, in their Room and Stead alone, he bore the whole of that Punishment threatned in the Law, and incurred by the Breach of it; and that, in his Sufferings unto Death, he substitute himself in the Room of Sinners, and endured that Curse, bore that Wrath, and died that Death which is the Wages and just Desert of every Sin, and which the Sinner himself should have undergone; and that the Sufferings of the Son of God in our Nature, were a true, proper and expiatory Sacrifice, and a proper, real
and

and complete Satisfaction unto the Justice of God for Sin; according to *Confess. Chap. 8. § 1, 4, 5. and Chap. 11. § 3. Larg. Cat. Q. 71.* and the Scriptures cited. And they thereby reject and condemn all opposite Principles held forth in the foresaid *Catechism*, and all other *Arminian* and *Baxterian* Tenets, contrary to, or inconsistent herewith.

Also, they declare, acknowledge and assert, That the Obedience of Christ in his Life, and his Sufferings unto Death, commonly called his *Active* and *Passive* Obedience, is that perfect and complete Righteousness, on the account of which alone a Sinner is justified in the Sight of God; and that it is upon the account of this Righteousness imputed, that Sin is pardoned, and that the Persons of any are accepted as righteous in the Sight of God; and that this Righteousness imputed, is the only Foundation and Ground of a Sinner's Right and Title unto eternal Life: And altho' the Grace of Faith be the Instrument whereby we receive and apply Christ and his Righteousness; yet neither Faith, Gospel-repentance, nor our sincere Obedience, either all of them together, or any of them separately, are our justifying Righteousness in the Sight of God, or the Ground of our Acceptance, or of our Right and Title unto eternal Life; according to *Confess. Chap. 11. § 1. Larg. Cat. Q. 73.* and the Scriptures cited. And they hereby reject and condemn all opposite Principles contained in the foresaid *Catechism*, and all other *Popish*, *Arminian* or *Baxterian* Tenets, contrary to, or inconsistent herewith.

Also, they acknowledge, declare and assert, That any Want of Conformity to the righteous and holy Law of God, is a Sin, as well as all actual and voluntary Transgressions of the Law, *Confess. Chap. 6. § 4, 6. Larg. Cat. Q. 24. Short. Cat. Q. 14.* And that every Sin doth, in its own Nature, deserve the Wrath and Curse of God, both in this Life and that which is to come, according to *Confess. Chap. 15 Sect. 4. and Larg. Cat. Q. 152* And consequently,
that

that the original Corruption and Depravation of our Nature is a damnable Sin, *Confess.* Chap. 6. Sect. 6. and that Sinning and Suffering will be the Misery of the Damn'd in Hell thro' Eternity. And they hereby reject and condemn all contrary Principles, contained either in the foresaid Catechism, or maintained and defended by Mr. *Simson*, and all other contrary *Pelagian* and *Arminian* Tenets whatsoever.

Likewise, they acknowledge, declare and assert, That the *supreme* and *only* Standard, Measure and Rule of all virtuous and religious Actions, is the righteous and holy Will and Law of God, and not our own Self-interest and Pleasure, according to the Doctrine held forth from the Word, *Confess.* Chap. 1. § 2. *Larg. Cat.* Q. 3. *Short. Cat.* Q. 2. And they hereby reject and condemn all contrary Principles and Tenets maintained by Mr. *Campbell* and others.

Also, they hereby acknowledge, declare and assert, That altho' all that believe in Jesus are delivered from the Moral Law as a Covenant of Works, so as thereby they are neither justified nor condemned; yet they are under perpetual and indissoluble Obligations to conform themselves to the Moral Law as a Rule of their Obedience, not only because of Blessings and Benefits which they have received, but from the Authority of God as he is *JEHOVAH*, the Great Lawgiver, whose Perfections are infinitely Glorious and Excellent, and whose Dominion is over all; according to *Confess.* Chap. 19. § 5, 6. And they hereby reject and condemn all contrary Principles held forth in the foresaid *Catechism*, and all other *Antinomian* Principles and Tenets inconsistent herewith.

Further, they acknowledge, declare and assert, That God hath all Life, Glory, Goodness and Blessedness in and of himself, and is alone in and unto himself All-sufficient, not standing in Need of Creatures which he hath made, nor deriving any Glory
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from them, but only manifesting his own Glory, in, by, unto, and upon them: And that he hath most sovereign Dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever himself pleaseth: And that any Rewards that he has promised to any of his Creatures, are free and voluntary; and that, in all their Obedience, Worship and Service, they can neither profit him, nor be any Way advantageous unto him; according to the Doctrine held forth from the Word of God, *Confess.* Chap. 2 Sect. 2. Chap. 7. Sect. 1. And they hereby *rejeēt* and *condemn* all contrary Principles and Tenets maintained by Mr. *Campbell* and others.

In like Manner, they hereby acknowledge, declare and assert, That the Principle and leading Motive and Spring of true Love to God, or of acceptable Obedience and Service unto him, is not our own *Self-interest*, or our own Happiness and Felicity, tho' the same is by Divine Condescension inseparably connected therewith; but that the leading Motive of all true Love to God, is the supereminent and glorious Perfections and Excellencies of his Nature, as they shine forth and are manifested in the Person of him who is IMMANUEL, *God with us*; and that all who truly love God, do love him chiefly for *himself*: As also, That all acceptable Obedience and Service unto him is primarily and chiefly influenced from a Regard unto the Authority of God in Christ expressed in his holy Law, and proceeds from a Principle of Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ: And that the principal and chief End of all such Obedience is, that God may be honoured and glorified in our Bodies and Spirits which are his; and consequently, all that Obedience and Service to God, that is principally influenced, and primarily springs from *One's Self-interest*, Advantage or Applause, or from Fear of Punishment, or the Hope of a Reward, is *legal*, *mercenary*, and *servile*, and moves in no higher Sphere than what Men in a natural State may attain unto; according to the Doctrine held forth
from

from the Scriptures, *Confess.* Chap. 16. Sect. 2, 7. *Larg. and Short. Cat.* Q. 1. And they hereby reject and condemn all contrary Errors maintained by Mr. *Simson* and Mr. *Campbell*, as having a direct Tendency to make all our Acts of Obedience and Worship *servile* and *mercenary*, and so to destroy and overturn the specifick Difference that is between *Common* and *Saving Grace*, or between the Obedience of the Temporary and the Obedience of the sound Believer, and to establish only a *gradual* Difference between Common Grace in the one, and Saving Grace in the other, which is a gross Error of Mr. *Baxter*, and of the *Arminians* and others.

In like Manner, they acknowledge, declare and assert, That all such as have saving Faith, believe in the Lord Jesus, as *the Christ*, the Son of God; and that the *Apostles* and *Disciples* of our Lord, in the Days of his Humiliation, did acknowledge, believe in, and worship their Lord and Master as the true promised *Messiah*, the Son of the living God, the *only Begotten of the Father*, and expected from him spiritual and eternal Life and Salvation; and that all who truly believe in the Lord Jesus, can neither *totally* nor *finally* fall away from a State of Grace; and that the Faith of the Apostles and Disciples of our Lord did not fail in the Interval of Time between his Death and Resurrection; and therefore, whatever Clouds and Doubts they were under, they were never so far left as to conclude, that their Lord and Master was a *downright Deceiver* and *Impostor*: According to *Confess.* Chap. 8. Sect. 1. Chap. 14. Sect. 2. Chap. 17. Sect. 1, 3. *Larg. Cat.* Q. 72. *Short. Cat.* Q. 86. and Scriptures cited. And they hereby reject and condemn all contrary Principles and Tenets maintained by Mr. *Campbell*, or contained in the fore said *Catechism revised*, and all other Principles and Tenets inconsistent herewith.

The PRESBYTERY likewise taking to their serious Consideration, That the Testimony of the Church of Christ in this Land has, ever since our

Reformation from Popery, been stated in a special Manner for the *Prerogative Royal* of the *Prince of the Kings of the Earth*, as *King, Head and Lord* over his own House, and for the Government, Worship and Discipline which he has appointed and instituted in the same; tho', in this perilous Time wherein their Lot is cast, the *Doctrine* is also undermined and subverted, which (as has been observed) was not the Trial of this Church in former Periods: Therefore they judge it their Duty to bear Testimony for the *Sovereignty and Headship* of the Lord Jesus over his own House, and to declare their Adherence to the Contendings, Wrestlings and Testimonies of this Church, and her several Members, both *Ministers and Professors*, for the same.

Likeas, the *Ministers associate* for the Exercise of Church Government and Discipline in a *Presbyterial Capacity*, being now *met in Presbytery*, did, and hereby do acknowledge, declare and assert, That the Lord Jesus Christ, our great IMMANUEL, and he alone, is *King over Zion the Hill of his Holiness*; and that he is the only Head, Lord and Lawgiver over his own House; and that to him alone it appertains, to give Officers, Laws and Ordinances to the Church, which is his spiritual, free and independent Kingdom; and that the Office-bearers in the House of God, in all their several Spiritual and Ecclesiastical Functions and Administrations, as also all the Courts and Judicatories appointed by the Lord Jesus in the Church, his spiritual Kingdom, are *subordinate to him alone* in their Ecclesiastical Administrations; and that the Office-bearers of the Church have Power, Warrant and Authority from the Lord Jesus, to hold *General Assemblies*, as well as other subordinate Ecclesiastical Judicatories, for the Exercise of Church Government and Discipline, either at *stated Times*, or *occasionally*, as the Circumstances or Necessity of the Church requires; and to dissolve themselves, and appoint the Time of their next Meeting, according to the Word of God, *Psal. 2.*
through.

throughout. *Isa.* 9. 6, 7. *Mat.* 16. 19. Chap. 28. 18, 19, 20. *Eph.* 1. 20, ——— 23. the laudable Acts and Constitutions of this Church, particularly Act Sess. 26th, Assen. 1638. and Act Assen. 1647, *approving the Confession of Faith*, Sess. 23. it being always free to the Civil Magistrate to call Synods and Assemblies of Ministers and Elders, for consulting and advising with them, in Matters of Religion, upon any necessary Occasion, according to the foresaid Acts. And they hereby reject and *condemn* the following *Erastian* Principles and Tenets; (1.) That the Civil Magistrate is Supreme over all Persons, and in all Causes, Ecclesiastical as well as Civil. (2.) That the Office-bearers of the Church, in their Spiritual and Ecclesiastical Functions and Administrations, are subordinate unto the Civil Magistrate. (3.) That the external Government of the Church is *precarious*, or depends upon the Will and Pleasure of the Civil Magistrate. (4.) That the Ordering and Disposing of the external Government and Policy of the Church, doth properly belong to the Civil Magistrate, by vertue of his Prerogative and Supremacy in Causes Ecclesiastick: And that the Civil Magistrate may emit such *Constitutions, Acts and Orders*, concerning the Administration of the external Government of the Church, and concerning all Ecclesiastical Meetings and Matters to be proposed and determined therein, as he in his Wisdom shall think fit; as was enacted by Parliament, and practised in the late persecuting Times. All which, and the like Principles and Tenets, have a direct Tendency to confound the Ecclesiastick and Civil Jurisdictions, and have been witnessed against by the faithful Ministers and Members of this Church, as dishonouring to the Son of God, and divesting him of his Prerogative Royal as King over the Church, his own *free, spiritual and independent Kingdom*.

Likewise, they acknowledge, declare and assert, That the Lord Jesus, the alone *King and Head* of his Church, hath appointed a *particular Form of Government*

vernment to take Place therein, distinct from the Civil Government, and not subordinate to the Civil Magistrate; which Form of Government is to continue to the End of the World *unalterable*: And that *Presbyterial* Church Government, without any *Superiority* of Office above a *teaching Presbyter*, in the due Subordination of Kirk-Sessions to Presbyteries, of Presbyteries to Provincial Synods, and of Provincial Synods to General Assemblies, is that *only Form* of Government laid down and appointed by the Lord Christ in his Word; which Form of Government has been received and owned by this Church, as the *only* Government of Divine Institution and Appointment; as is evident from her publick Acts and Constitutions, particularly from the *second Book of Discipline*, and the *Propositions concerning Church-government*, with the Scripture Proofs and Arguments annexed, as the said Propositions were received and approved by the Assem. 1645, Sess. 16. And they hereby reject and condemn the following Principles and Tenets, whether *Eraastian*, *Prelatick* or *Sectarian*; (1.) That the Lord Jesus hath not appointed in his Word any particular Form of Government in his Church under the New Testament; a Principle highly reflecting upon the Head of the Church, as if he had not been as *faithful in his own House as a Son*, as *Moses was as a Servant*. (2.) That the *Diocessan Bishop* or *Prelate* is an Office superior to a teaching Presbyter; which Principle stands condemned by several Acts and Constitutions of this Church, as contrary to the Word of God, and as a gross *Usurpation* in the House of God, and which brought forth *ANTICHRIST that Man of Sin*. (3.) That a particular Congregational Church is not subordinate nor accountable unto any superior Judicatory; which Principle and Tenet is also condemned by the laudable Acts and Constitutions of this Church, as contrary to the Word of God, and as having a native and direct Tendency to introduce a licentious Laxness

Laxness in Principle, and an universal Disorder in Practice, in the House of God.

Also, they acknowledge, declare and assert, That unto the *Office-bearers* of the Church, and to them alone, the *Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven* are committed; particularly the *Key of Doctrine* for expounding and preaching the Word, and determining Controversies of Faith according to the Scriptures; the *Key of Government and Discipline*, for preserving the Beauty and Purity of the Church, and for inflicting of Church Censures upon the Erroneous, the Scandalous and Obstinate, that she may be preserved, or purged from such Errors in Principle, or such Scandals in Practice, whereby she may be in Danger of being corrupted; as also the *Key of Ordination and Mission*, for the ordaining and sending forth of Church-Officers, for spiritual Service and Ministration in the House of God, according to *Mat. 16. 19. John 20. 23. Mat. 18. 18. Acts 15. Acts 16. 4. Mat. 28. 19, 20. Mark 16. 15. 2 Tim. 2. 2.* the Books of Discipline, Propositions concerning Church-government and Ordination of Ministers, and other laudable Acts and Constitutions of this Church. And concerning that Power and Authority which belongs to the Office-bearers of the Church in their judicative Capacity. They further declare and assert, That the same is only a *Stewardly* and *Ministerial* Authority, subordinate unto the Authority and Laws of the *Head* of the Church, declared and published in his own Word; and, to express it in the Words of our *Conf. Chap. 31. § 3.* "It belongeth to Synods and Councils, Ministerially to determine Controversies of Faith, and Cases of Conscience, to set down Rules and Directions for better ordering of the publick Worship of God, and Government of his Church; to receive Complaints in Cases of Mal-administration, and authoritatively to determine the same: Which Decrees and Determinations, if consonant to the Word of God, are to be received with Reverence and Submission,

" Not

“ not only for their Agreement with the Word, but
 “ also for the Power whereby they are made, as
 “ being an Ordinance of God appointed thereunto
 “ in his Word.” And they hereby reject and condemn the following *sektarian* Principles; That the Keys of Government and Discipline are given by the Head of the Church to the whole Community of the Faithful; and that Ecclesiastical Synods and Councils have only a mere *consultative* Power and Authority: Which Principles they condemn, as contrary to the Word of God, the laudable Acts and Constitutions of this Church founded thereupon, and as having a native Tendency to introduce Anarchy and Confusion into the House of God.

Likewise, they acknowledge, assert and declare, That *Ministers*, and other *Office-bearers* in the Church, ought to be *set over* Congregations, by the Call and Consent of the *Majority* of *suck* in these Congregations, who are admitted to *full Communion* with the Church in all her *sealing Ordinances*; and that there should be no *Preference* of Voices in this Matter, upon the Account of any *secular* Consideration; according to *Acts* 1. 16. to the Close of the Chapter. *Acts* 6. 2,-----6. Chap. 14. 23. *John* 10. 4, 5. 1 *John* 4. 1. *James* 2. 1,----6. with many other Scriptures; and according to our *Books of Discipline*, and *Acts of Assembly*, agreeable thereto. And they reject and condemn all contrary Principles, Tenets and Practices, whereby the Scripture Rule and Pattern, in this important Matter, is denied and rejected, and Ministers are imposed upon dissenting and reclaiming Congregations.

In like Manner, they do hereby own and assert the perpetual Obligation of the *National Covenant* of *Scotland*, frequently subscribed by Persons of all Ranks in this Kingdom; and particularly as approved of and explained by the General Assembly 1638, and sworn by all Ranks of Persons *Anno* 1639, and ratified by Act of Parliament 1640. As also, they own and assert the perpetual Obligation of the So-
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lemn League and Covenant, for maintaining and carrying on a Work of Reformation in the *Three Kingdoms*, taken and subscribed by all Ranks in *Scotland* and *England* Anno 1643, ratified by Act of Parliament of *Scotland* Anno 1644; and particularly as renewed in *Scotland*, with an Acknowledgment of Sins and Engagements to Duties by all Ranks Anno 1648: Concerning which Oaths and Covenants, they declare and assert, That, as to the *Matter* of them, they were *lawful*, being plainly contained in the Word of God; and, as to their Ends, they were laudable and necessary: And therefore they did, and hereby do, declare their *Adherence* to the same.

Likewise, they hereby receive, acknowledge and approve all the several Pieces of Reformation attain'd unto by this Church in her several reforming Periods; particularly the *Confession of Faith*, compiled by the *Assembly of Divines* who met at *Westminster*, with *Commissioners* from the Church of *Scotland*: Which Confession they receive and own as the *Confession of their Faith*, as the same was received and approved by Act of Assembly 1647, Sess. 23. As also, they receive and own the whole Doctrine contained in the *Larger and Shorter Catechisms*, compil'd by the fore-said *Assembly at Westminster*, and approved by Acts of Assembly 1648, Sessions 10. and 19. as a Part of Uniformity, in Catechising, for the *Three Kingdoms*; and ratified by Act of Parliament, *February* 7th 1649. As also the *Form of Church-Government and Ordination of Ministers*, as the same was received and approved by Act of Assembly 1645, Sess. 16. and the *Directory for publick Worship*, as the same stands approved by Assembly 1645, Sess. 10. together with all the *Acts of Assembly* from 1638 to 1650, and since that Time, in as far as they were past for advancing and carrying on a Covenanted Reformation, agreeable to the Word of God, and the received Principles and Constitutions of this Church.

Likewise, they hereby declare their Adherence to the several *Testimonies*, *Declarations* and *Warnings* e-
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mitted in Behalf of the Covenanted Reformation of this Church, from the Year 1650 to the Year 1688; particularly to the Contendings and Wrestlings during that Period, whereby a great *Cloud of Witnesses resisted even unto Blood*, in testifying for the Supremacy and Headship of the Lord Jesus over his own House, and other Branches of our Covenanted Reformation, in Opposition to *abjured Prelacy*, and that blasphemous Supremacy, usurped by the Civil Powers over the House of God, under the foresaid Period. And they hereby condemn all Ecclesiastical Censures whatsoever, pass'd or inflicted upon any, whether Ministers, Elders or others, from the Year 1650 to this Time, for their Adherence unto, or witnessing for, any Branch of our Covenanted Reformation.

Also, they hereby declare their Adherence to the several *Testimonies*, whether given in by Representations and Petitions to the several General Assemblies, or otherwise emitted and published, since the Year 1688, against the several *sinful Omissions* of the Judicatories of this Church above-mentioned, or the several Steps of Declining and Backsliding in this present Age from a Covenanted Reformation once attain'd unto; and particularly, to the several *Representations* offered by the *Ministers of this Presbytery* to the *Commission* of the *General Assembly* that met at *Edinburgh August 1733*; and to the *Paper* that was afterwards emitted by them, intituled, *A Testimony to the Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline of the Church of Scotland*; as also, to the *Reasons*, published by them, *Why they have not acceded to the Judicatories of the established Church*.

Thus *this Presbytery* have endeavoured to discharge themselves of what they apprehend to be their Duty in their *present Situation*; and their Design in the whole is, to *bear Testimony to the Truths of God*, opposed or assaulted in the present Age, and against the Defections and Backslidings, whether in the present or former Times, for the *Glory of God*, and the Honour

nour of his Truth, and (if the Lord may be graciously pleased to bless this Mean) to excite the *present Generation to search and try their Ways, and to turn again to the Lord*, from whom we have every one deeply revolted: As also, to bear Testimony to *Scotland's Covenanted Reformation, for the Sake of the Generations to come*; that they may consider the *Palaces of Zion, and mark her Bulwarks*, and may know what the Lord has done for *Scotland*; that they may set their Hope in God, and may neither forget his Works, nor be as their *Fathers a stubborn and rebellious Generation, that set not their Heart aright, and whose Spirit was not stedfast with God. And they obtest and intreat all Ranks of Persons whatsoever, into whose Hands this their Act, Declaration and Testimony may come, that laying aside all carnal and polittick Intendments, every Thing may be weigh'd in the Balance of the Sanctuary*; and that, in the Fear of that great and dreadful Name, *The Lord our God*, they may consider both *their own*, and the Iniquities of our *Fathers*, and may return unto the Lord, by Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a particular Acknowledgment of Sin, and unfeigned and thorow Reformation: And in returning to the Lord, we may hope and expect, that He that hath *torn us will heal us*, and that *He that hath smitten, will bind us up*. But, if we go on obstinately in our Trespases, we have just Ground to fear, that, as we are *at present spinning away in our Sins, and consumed under our manifold spiritual Strokes and Judgments*, so a righteous and holy God may be provoked to come out of his Place, and punish the Inhabitants of this Land for their Iniquities, and that he may send a *Sword*, or some desolating Calamity and Judgment, to *avenge the Quarrel of his Covenant*.

May the Lord himself return; May he look down from Heaven, and behold, and visit this Vine, the Vineyard which his own Right-hand hath planted, the Branch which he hath made strong for himself; it is burnt with Fire, it is cut down; they perish at the Rebuke of his

Countenance: May his Hand be upon the Man of his Right-hand, upon the Son of Man whom he hath made strong for himself, so shall we not go back from him: May he quicken us, and we will call upon his Name. Turn us again, O Lord God of Hosts, cause thy Face to shine, and we shall be saved.

Extracted by

J. A. FISHER *Cls. Pres.*



ACT concerning the ADMISSION of the Reverend Mr. *Ralph Erskine* and Mr. *Thomas Mair* as Members of Presbytery.

AT the Kirk of *Orwel*, the Eighteenth Day of *February* One thousand seven hundred and thirty seven Years. Which Day and Place, the Ministers and Elders *associate* together being met in *Presbytery*, there was presented unto them, by the Reverend Mr. *Thomas Mair* Minister at *Orwel*, a Paper signed by him, and intituled, *Declaration of Secession from the present Judicatories of the Church of Scotland, &c.* And at presenting the said Paper, he represented unto the *Presbytery*, That it was a true and just *Double* of his *Declaration* and *Protestation* given in to the *Presbytery* of *Dunfermline*, at their Meeting on the *Sixteenth* current; and he craved that the same might be read and considered by this *Presbytery*, whereupon they agreed to read the same: The *Tenor* whereof follows;

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DECLARATION of SECESSION
 from the present Judicatories of the
 Church of *Scotland*, by Mr. *Thomas*
Mair Minister at *Orwel*, given in to
 the Reverend the Presbytery of *Dun-*
fermline, met at *Dunfermline* the Six-
 teenth Day of *February* 1737 Years.

W HEN I joined in the *Representation* and *Testi-*
mony therein, given in to the Commission in
August last by Mr. *Ralph Erskine*; tho' I
 had a general View of several other Things among
 us as just Ground of Humiliation, and what ought to
 be testified against, which there was not then Oppor-
 tunity to digest into Order; yet I had not then any
 form'd Intention of carrying the Matter further than
 was done at that Time, or at most than a tabling of
 some *Representation* and *Testimony* of the same Nature
 before our Presbytery and Synod, partly for my own
 Exoneration, and partly as a Mean proper to be used
 in a Way of Communion with the Judicatories of the
 Church, for exciting to what I think is the necessary
 Duty of this Church at this Day. Neither had I
 any Thought of stating all the Particulars contained
 in that *Representation*, as *Grounds* of *Secession* from the
 Judicatories of the Church, far less as *Grounds* of
present Secession, or of looking on them all as Terms
 of *Christian* or *Ministerial Communion*.

Yet being in Providence thus call'd out (tho' most
 unworthy) to essay Witnessing for the Lord in a Day
 of his great Anger and contending with us in many
 remarkable Instances; as I think myself bound to ad-
 here to every one of the Particulars already represen-
 ted as Matter of *Testimony*, so the Things contained
 in that *Representation*, together with the Treatment
 it has met with from the *Commission* and otherwise,
 have, in Concurrence with several other Considera-
 tions,

tions, engaged me to a further and more close Enquiry into the State of Matters with us in this Church, and the Judicatories thereof: And particularly to enquire in what Respects, and how far the present Judicatories of this Church have receded from the *Law* and *Testimony*, and what I'm called to upon the whole. And,

1st, The *Recessions* of the Church from the *Law* and *Testimony*, are what appear very great and dismal; whether we take a View of the particular Ministers, Preachers and Members in the diffused Church, or the Church as represented in her Judicatories, in their own Actings, and the manifest Accession to the Guilt of the particular Members thereof.

(1.) The *Law* and *Testimony* requires, That the Lord's People, the Multitude of the Disciples, have Liberty to chuse their own Overseers, *Acts* 1. 23.—6. 3.—14. 23. But many Ministers in the Church are not only privately, but even publicly, and in open Court, denying and impugning this, and charging the perfect Rule with an utter Want of any Rule or Statute as to this important Matter, except the general Rules of Edification and Order, which they manifestly abuse and misapply to their own Purposes; contrary to the evident Design of these Golden Rules, which make exceedingly against their Principle and Practice in this Matter. And, as they are from Time to Time openly declaring their Mind on this Head, without receiving any Check or Censure for the same; so the Judicatories of the Church are in their Practice going the same Way, yea, as acting in Contradiction to the Rule, by thrusting in Men into the Pastoral Charge among even reclaiming Congregations, who not only are willing to chuse an unexceptional Person, but have actually made Choice of one according to Rule. And tho' the Act of Assembly 1732 anent Settlements be repealed or laid aside; yet, as there is no Acknowledgment in the Repeal of the Iniquity of that Act, as contrary to the

the Word of God, so the Act continues to take place in Practice, even as that Method of settling Congregations was much practised before the Law was framed; yea, both before and since the Repeal of that iniquous Act, many Settlements have been made in Congregations, even worse than the said Act requires; By all which, many are now settled in Congregations wanting one special Branch of a lawful Calling to the Ministry. And we cannot omit here observing, That the Church of *Scotland* is in this Point more corrupt than the Church of *Rome* was even in the 7th Century, at least when, tho' come to a great Height otherwise in Superstition and Idolatry, they had not as yet given up with that Principle of Christianity, That the Choice of the People was necessary in the Election of a Pastor †; and that, where this was wanting, the Election was null. Yea, as some observe, it was the 11th Century before this Right was taken from the People; and they were then robb'd of it by Pope *John* the 17th (or as others, the 19th) a Necromancer. And however long and frequent Use, together with the sad Prevalency and Generality of the Defection, may have much extinguished the Impression of the Weight of this Matter from the Minds of many; yet, as I cannot but look upon it as most nearly concerning the very Foundations of a Christian Church; so it is very evident, that both the Primitive and Reforming Church had this Matter very deeply at Heart, as a Principle which ought by all Means to be maintained. The Objection and Evasion some here make Use of is weak and frivolous, *viz.* "That by the People, to whom the Right belonged, may be understood the Heritors and Elders, or the like, as representing the People: And that the Robbery committed by the Popish Church, was their restricting the Choice to their Clergy." For, as is observed by *Calvin*, after that the Clergy had robb'd the People of their Right of chusing their Pastors, the Princes assumed (and thus

† *Petrie's Hist.* p. 63, 65.

thus far took from the Clergy) the Right of presenting to Congregations, as reckoning they had as good Right and Warrant for this as the Clergy. But according to the original Constitution *, it was the *Plebs*, the *Multitude*, the A L L, over whom the Pastor was to have Charge, that were to chuse or give Consent to his being set over them: And, as a further Evidence of this, in the following Section we find the People expressly distinguished from Heritors or these in Honour, and from Elders and Clergy; where, for the greater Order in the Election, and preventing Tumult and Abuse, the different Part each of these should Act is expressly assigned. *Teneatur honoratorum Testimonium, subscriptio Clericorum ordinis consensus ac Plebis, aliter fieri nulla ratio finit.* So,

(2.) The *Law and Testimony* requires, That Judicatories be constitute of such as are lawfully ordain'd Office-bearers in the Church; as is plain from the very Nature of Church-judicatories, and the professed End of their Meeting. Those who profess to meet in the Name of Christ, for managing the Affairs of his House, must be cloathed with his Authority. *No Man taketh this Honour unto himself, but he that is called of God*, Heb. 5. 4. And so even the great High Priest of our Profession, Jesus Christ, came not without a Commission from the Father: Yet now there is scarce any of our Judicatories but what have fewer or moe that are obtruded upon Congregations without a lawful Calling, and may therefore be too justly said to have *run unsent*; and therefore have no just Pretension to Authority from our Lord to manage the Affairs of his House, or judge in his Name.

(3.) The *Law and Testimony* requires, That Judicatories be careful and faithful to have such purged out, as either by their Doctrine or Conversation act for the Destruction of Souls, and the Perverting of the Gospel†. But tho' there are multiplied heavy Complaints

* *Calv. Inst. L. 4. C. 4. § 11, 12.* † *Gal. 1. 7, 8, 9.—5. 12. Rev. 2. 14, 20.*

Complaints thro' the Land against many who bear the Name of Ministers, both as to their Doctrine, their corrupting the Simplicity of the Gospel, and giving Poison instead of Food to Souls; and as to their vain, carnal and unbecoming Conversation, whereby they make the Sacrifice of the Lord to be abhorred: Yet, so far is there from a suitable Zeal and Concern shown for prosecuting the Ends of Discipline, in searching out and censuring such, that, in the Management of Judicatories, there are such Methods taken for covering them from Censure, as gives too sad Evidence there is nothing of due Faithfulness this Way to be expected; as appears evident from the Management of both first and second Processes against Professor *Simson*, and in the Conduct with reference to Professor *Campbell*, who was dismissed without the least Censure; yea, without so much as any narrow Enquiry into his Scheme, either by the Assembly, the Commission or their Committee. For whatever Length the Sub-Committee brought that Enquiry, yet the Committee, who put that Work upon them, would not so much as examine or judge of their Report, so as either to adopt or reject it; but wrapt all up in a few Generals, to put an End to the Process, in such Manner as might screen from Censure the Broacher of that very dangerous Scheme. Yea, such was the Issue it was brought to, as while the Committee and Assembly endeavoured to cover Professor *Campbell* from the Imputation of Error, and from Censure, for the same, they themselves are entangled in the Snare of his pernicious *Errors*, while they make the Ground of their assailing him from the Charge of Error to be his asserting, That our Delight in the Glory of God is the Origin, chief Spring, sole Standard, &c. of all virtuous and religious Actions: And so that Self-interest, or Pleasure and Delight, is still the highest and chief Motive to Obedience; only that this Delight should terminate on or extend to the Glory of God: By which Professor *Campbell* means

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(as he elsewhere explains himself) our Enjoyment of an infinitely glorious God, who alone can fully satisfy our Desires, or gratify our Self-love. These are Instances of the Conduct of Judicatories as to Doctrine. And the Charge seems no less verified against their Conduct with reference to Processes anent the Conversation of Ministers, if we take a View of the Issue of the Process against Mr. *Greenlees* at *Ceres*, and that against Mr. *Young* at *Leslie* (not to insist on the Management with reference to several Candidates for the Ministry, who accepted Presentations, and had Accusations led against their moral Character, and, in the Judgment of many, so far at least instructed, as rendred a Delay of their Settlement, in order to further Enquiry, necessary for Edification.) When such Instances of Error and scandalous Behaviour have been wrapt up in the Manner wherein particularly these four specified were; What Ground have any to hope for Redress in other Cases? Or what Conclusion can they draw from the Procedure in these, but that it is in vain to table any Complaint of that Kind? Seeing all that will be gained will be much Trouble and Charge to the Pursuer, without any Redress of the Grievance complain'd of.

(4.) The Law and Testimony requires the Lord's People to flee from Strangers and Hirelings, and not hear them, because they are Thieves and Robbers; to beware of false Prophets, who are known by their Fruits; and declares, That they who run unsent, shall not profit the People: Yet our Judicatories will have People to hear such, or be deprived of Ordinances altogether, Act Assen. 1733, *anent the Presbytery of Dunfermline*.

(5.) Ministers, and so Judicatories, are called to be at Pains to gather the Flock of Christ; and there is a Wo pronounced against the Shepherds that scatter the Flock, and gather them not: But Judicatories are now at much Pains to scatter the Flock, and deprive them of their spiritual Food, by their Acts, Intrusions, &c.

(6.) Ju-

(6.) Judicatories are called to lay out themselves for reforming what is amiss, and that by returning to the Law and Testimony: But now the Practice of Judicatories seems too plainly to speak out a stated Design (at least of those who are the special Springs of the Management) to have a Covenanted Work of Reformation altogether overthrown, and the Church modelled in a Conformity with *England*, if not worse. And, tho' a good Act was of late made anent Gospel-preaching, and a Recommendation anent settling Congregations, which some valued as seeming to be some Kind of Reviving of the old good Rules of this Church on that Head; yet it is evident, that this Recommendation, so far as it might be called a Reviving of these old Rules, together with the above Act anent Doctrine, are in a special Manner transgressed and broken through without Controul; yea, transgressed, as it were with the same Breath by the Assemblies by which they were made: Particularly in the Affair of Professor *Campbell*, when the Assembly, together with the Committee appointed to ripen that Affair, did not only involve themselves in the Guilt of the Scandal given by his Scheme, by dismissing that Affair without due Enquiry into it, or inflicting the least Censure upon the said Mr. *Campbell*; but also, they have materially adopted his Scheme, particularly by their making his asserting that which is the very Substance of it (*viz.* That our Delight in the Glory of God, is the Origin of moral Virtue) to be the Ground upon which they assaile him from the Charge of Error. So that now, not only according to Mr. *Campbell's* Opinion, but even according to the Assembly's Decision, our Delight, Pleasure or Satisfaction (all which, among other Terms, Mr. *Campbell* makes synonymous) terminating on the Glory of God (by which, as Mr. *Campbell* explains himself, is meant the Enjoyment of an infinitely glorious God, as He who can give us full Satisfaction, or fully gratify our Self-love) is the first Spring and chief Motive of all virtuous and religious Actions. And

as to the Recommendation anent Settlements, it was no less palpably broke through by the Assembly in the Case of *Traquair* and *Dennie*; And what then can be expected of inferior Judicatories? I'm far from instituting a Comparison of Designs, especially with the worthy Members of Assembly who were active and zealous for that Act anent Doctrine, and for the Reviving of our old Rules anent Settlements: Yet it is to be lamented, that the Event has too much of a Parallel with that of King *Charles's* Proclamation against Profanity, which ushered in a very Deluge thereof; and the Exception made in the late Toleration, of Popery, and those who deny any of the Persons of the Godhead; Both which Evils do in a special Manner prevail in the Land, without effectual Check.

(7.) While the Lord requires the Stewards of his House to be faithful, and particularly not to spare to shew unto the House of *Jacob* their Transgressions; He surely calls Judicatories to encourage and strengthen the Hands of such as are thus faithful in the Discharge of their Work. But the Judicatories of the Church have not only discountenanced and censured Faithfulness this Way, but have even thrust out four of their Fellow-labourers from their Communion upon account thereof.

(8.) They who bear the Office and Character of Builders in *Zion*, are called to build upon the Foundations of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner-Stone. But the Judicatories of the Church, and Office-bearers therein, are (may we not say) at least in a great Measure, gone off from these Foundations; Many of them in their Doctrine, as appears from their materially adopting Mr. *Campbell's* Scheme, intirely waving Mr. *Simson's* Scheme in his first Libel, and slightly censuring his *Arian Errors*. And as to Government, they are too palpably building on the Foundations of worldly Policy (some of them even openly denying that there is any Rule in Scripture directing how to settle Con-

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gregations, or in Opposition to Patronage) and some of them building upon Latitudinarian Principles, (giving Liberty to every Man to worship God in their own Way, or according to their own Sentiments) and thus building on Principles opposite to the Doctrines taught by the Apostles and Prophets, which are the Foundations of the Building whereof Jesus Christ is the chief Corner-Stone.

(9.) The Law and Testimony requires Ministers and Judicatories to commit the Gospel that is intrusted unto them, unto faithful Men who shall be able to teach others, 2 *Tim.* 2. But is it not for a Lamentation, that while those that have most Evidence of their having obtained Grace to be faithful, are discouraged and discountenanced, such are taken by the Hand, and appointed Office-bearers in the Church, not a few of whom give little Evidence, either by their Doctrine or Conversation, that they are or will be faithful.

2dly, I come next to enquire, Whether I can warrantably, with Safety, and without manifold Hazard, continue in Communion with the Judicatories of the Church; or, if the Lord be calling to a present Withdrawing and Coming out from them? And,

(1.) It seems evidently unsafe and dangerous to continue in Communion with the Judicatories of this Church, if we consider the manifold Proofs she has given of her hating to be reformed. This may appear partly from what is above-said; and we may further observe, that the Lord has been using a great Variety of Means with us for a long Time, not only by a plentiful Dispensation of his Word and Ordinances, but also by manifold Dispensations of adorable Providence, both adverse and prosperous: And, when he has, in more than ordinary remarkable Ways, been of late Years threatening us with Sword, or Famine, or Pestilence, or all the three, and punishing us by many temporal and spiritual Judgments; yet, in midst of all, not only are all Ranks sinning still more and more; not only are
many

many accounting these the best Days, and the Generality sinking more and more deep in carnal Security, yea, even the wise as well as foolish Virgins slumbering and sleeping, and cannot be awakned by all the Alarms we have hitherto met with; but even the Judicatories of the Church, after all Endeavours used for their Excitement to Reformation, do not only neglect to fall in with these Means, but slight, contemn, and treat with Disdain, such Endeavours used; and this after long Continuance of Light, and fullest Means of Conviction: And when, notwithstanding of exceeding great Backslidings, and the Lord's remarkably lifting up his Hand against the Church; yet the Judicatories cannot be brought to a free and unhampered Acknowledgment of the Causes of the Lord's Controversy; yea, is sometimes even denying the need of solemn Fasting and Humiliation (as was the Case at last Commissions.) Have we not Reason to apprehend that the Lord is about to plead with us, because we say we have not sinned? and that he is about to take away the Hedge of his Vineyard, and suffer it to be troden down? and that continuing in the Judicatories in such a Case (especially when Opportunity may be had of essaying, in a judicative Capacity, that Work and Duty which they will by no Means comply with) will involve in the Guilt of that Neglect and Refusal, and so expose to the Judgments threatned for the same?

(2.) When the Judicatories of a Church are so far infatuated, as to thrust out from Church-communion and Society, both faithful Watchmen because of their Faithfulness, and the purer Part of her Members, who cannot go along with the Courses of Defection, but desire to keep their Garments clean; and when the Judicatories continue thus to treat Multitudes of the Lord's People, who, according to the Rules of the Church, stand debarred from Church-communion for their Non-submission to Intruders, &c. As this may be compared to the Case of a City or Nation thrusting out their Chariots and Horsemen from

from among them, even at a Time when the Enemy is not only entered their Borders, but is wasting the Country (which is the present Case) and as this sudden Ruin and Destruction is loudly threatned, so I reckon it both Duty and Interest for me to adhere to, and embark with, those who are in this Manner thrust out; especially when they are essaying, under the Conduct and Influence of the Spirit of the Lord, to lift up a Standard for the Lord's Cause and Truth, and against the Enemy that is come in like a Flood. So,

(3.) I think it appears evident, that as the true Church, the Tabernacle of *David*, is built on the Foundations of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner-Stone; so, at this Day, the Tabernacle is, by a Chain of extraordinary Providences, removed without the Camp: There is now a constitute Church thrust out from the Society of the Judicatories of this Church for their Faithfulness; and these who are thrust out, are building upon the true Foundations of the Church of Christ, while the Judicatories of this Church are many Ways overthrowing these Foundations, both as to Doctrine and Government, and building upon the Foundations of human Reason and carnal Policy. And therefore it is my Duty, as I would desire to be approven of the great Builder of *Zion*, to bear Hand to those, who are by Grace aiming at building on the true Foundation.

(4.) If the Flock of Christ are called to flee from, and not hear Strangers, Hirelings, and such as are Wolves, Thieves and Robbers; then I cannot see either Duty or Safety in joining with these, especially in such a near and close Union, as that of one sacred Society met in the Name of the Lord for the Management of the Affairs of his House; or the Consistency of doing so, with Ministerial Faithfulness in warning People to flee from such: And as little is it consistent with the very End of such Meetings, which, if at all valuable, is to take joint Counsel and Measures in the Management of the Affairs of the Church,

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to the Glory of God and the Good of Souls. To pretend to do this with declared Enemies of our Covenanted Reformation, and who are imbracing every Opportunity of pulling down the carved Work of God, seems exceeding inconsistent, and contrary to Reason and Religion. Sure it would be a most incongruous and unnatural Part, for a Company of Shepherds to resolve to associate with a Herd of Foxes and Wolves, to consult for the Welfare of the Flock, and so to adhere to these strange Counsellors, as nothing of any Moment shall be done without their Knowledge and Consent. But that this is and must be the Case of the Judicatories of this Church in their present Situation and Constitution, is most evident: And therefore it is high Time for any who desire the Good of the Flock, to withdraw from such a Mixture.

(5.) The Duty of maintaining the Peace and Unity of the Church, the Body of Christ, requires this Withdrawing from the present Judicatories of this Church, as they are constitute and manage: For, 1. Christ is the Centre of Union, from whom the Judicatories have of a long Time been making deep Defection; and as there can be no spiritual Union but by meeting in the Head, so sure it is vain to pretend Union, or the maintaining of true Unity, in a Way of departing from the Head. True it is, there may be Differences in lesser Matters, when yet, as to the Main, there is a Centring in the Head: But that this is not the Case now, is plain, seeing the very Foundations of both the Doctrine and Government of the Church of Christ are overturned, both in Word and Practice, by the present Judicatories, and such as are by them kept in Communion with this Church; as appears from what is above. So, 2. What Peace, Concord or Unity in a Society, especially a sacred one, where the Principles of the constituent Members of it are opposite to, and destructive of one another, and that in Matters of the greatest Moment to the very Being of a sacred Society? which

is the present Case with the Judicatories of this Church: And therefore it is my Duty, especially when I see a Society of the Lord's Servants pointing toward the Centre of Union, to withdraw from the present Judicatories, and adhere unto them in promoting the Ends of a Gospel-Ministry.

(6.) The Judicatories of this Church have been doing what in them lay to pull the Crown off from Christ's Head, and refusing to give him the Glory due to his Name, to give him the Glory of his Supreme Deity, by resenting suitably the blasphemous Denial of the same; and, instead thereof, have even kept the Blasphemer in full Communion with the Church, and refuse all Calls to lay to Heart, or acknowledge their Sin in this; whereby they have sadly involved themselves in the Guilt of denying the Son of God, 1 *John* 2. 22, 23. which is one special Mark of Antichrist: They have refused to give him the Glory of his Sovereignty, as the sole King and Lawgiver of his House; yea, have usurped a legislative Power over the same, and will not acknowledge any Sin therein: They have refused to give him the Glory of his Prophetical Office, by vindicating his Truths; and have suffered wounded Truth to ly bleeding on the Ground, rather than inflict Censure upon the Subverters of the Truth, and those who preach another Gospel, and bring another Doctrine than is taught in the Scriptures of Truth: And therefore it is my Duty to withdraw from them, and adhere to those who are endeavouring to maintain the Crown on Christ's Head, and to lift up the Standard of a Testimony for his injur'd Cause and Truth.

(7.) It is Duty in the Lord's Sight to make a Secession from those who combine to slay the Witnesses of Jesus Christ: But that this has been, and is the Way of the Judicatories of this Church, is plain from their suppressing Ministerial Freedom and Faithfulness, and thrusting out several of their Members for their Faithfulness; while at the same Time, they are embracing Intruders, and such as may contribute

more and more to a burying the Testimony of Jesus: And therefore I ought to withdraw from them.

(8.) The Lord requires all, and so, in a special Manner, Ministers of the Gospel, to shew a Concern for his Glory and the Welfare of Zion, preferring Zion to their chiefest Joy; and that Ministers particularly testify this, by endeavouring, by all Means, to have the Knowledge of the Lord's Name propagated in the Land, and to have the Generations to come in Case to praise the Lord. But, as the native Tendency of the present Practice of the Judicatories of this Church, particularly anent Settlements, is the training up the rising Generation in Ignorance and Error; so, according to the present Constitution and Ways of managing, there is little or nothing can be done, for preventing this Evil, in a Way of Communion, while the young Generation are altogether destitute of a Gospel-Ministry, having Hirelings intruded upon them, who cannot preach, because they are not sent: And therefore I reckon it Duty to essay in a Way of Secession, what cannot be done in a Way of Communion with the present Judicatories of the Church, and which yet is necessary to be done, for the Advancement of the Gospel, and Good of Souls.

(9.) Those whom the Lord seems to be polishing for his Work, are neglected as useless, yea, ordinarily traduced as dangerous in the Church; and there is no rational Prospect, in the present Situation of Matters in the Church, of their receiving Encouragement. Several are discouraged from attempting Preparation for publick Service in the Church, yea, considering the State of Matters as to the Fountains of sacred Learning, what Prospect can we have of a Succession of Gospel-Ministers? And, while Matters are thus with us, I think it an evident Call to essay other Methods for maintaining the Lord's Testimony in the Land.

(10.) There are many Evidences that the Sun is gone down upon us; that the Night is come on us; that the Lord is departed in his Anger, particularly
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and in an eminent Manner from the present Judicatories; while not only is there a general deep Sleep as at Midnight, not only further are the Beasts of Prey come abroad (while *Arians*, Infidels, Necromancers, are treading down the Vineyard of the Lord, yea infernal Spirits, as loosed by Law, coming abroad in the Land) but in the Judicatories Truth, and the Cause of Christ, receive new Wounds from Time to Time: And even those who desire to be faithful, are either so blindfolded that they cannot see the Snares laid for them, and the Plots against the Cause of God; or their Mouths so shut, that they cannot speak with Freedom and Boldness in the Cause, even when the Need is greatest; So that, may we not say, Counsel is perished from the Wise, and the Man of Might cannot find his Hands, while Counsel, Courage and Strength is retained by the opposite Party? As this is a sad Evidence of the Lord's forsaking the Judicatories of this Church; so I think he is making the Light to shine upon his Servants that are encamped in the Wilderness, and countenancing them in their Essay of bearing Testimony for him, his Truths and Cause, and in Opposition to the Defections of the Judicatories of the Church; and thus giving some clear Evidence, that it is his Work and Cause that is in the Hands of his Servants: And therefore, as I think it both Duty and Interest to follow the Light, so the Warning is awful against refusing to come out to the Help of the Lord against the Mighty.

Wherefore, and upon all the above-mentioned Reasons, and others that might be added, I judge it my Duty to declare and protest; Likeas, I hereby declare and protest, That I find myself obliged to make Secession from the present Judicatories of this Church, and that I can no longer join in Communion with them in a judicative Capacity, until they set about the Reformation of the above-mentioned and many other Evils complained of. And, notwithstanding of this my present Secession, I hereby declare my Resolution, thro' Grace, constantly to adhere to

our received Standards of Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government; particularly to our *Confession of Faith*, as the same was received and approved by Act of Assembly 1647; which *Confession* I still own as the Confession of my Faith; and to our *Larger and Shorter Catechisms*; and also to our *Form of Church-government, Directory for Publick Worship, and Ordination of Ministers*, as the same were received and approved by the several Acts of Assembly adopting the same. In like Manner, I hereby protest, That it shall be lawful and warrantable for me to join with such of my Brethren as have been thrust out from Ministerial Communion with the present Judicatories, and who are associate together in a Presbyterial Capacity, and endeavouring to lift up a Judicial Testimony against the prevailing Evils of the present Day, and the Sins and Backslidings of former Times; according to the Word of God, the foresaid Standards of Doctrine, &c. and the National Covenant of *Scotland*, and the Solemn League and Covenant of the Three Nations. And I further protest, That notwithstanding of this my Secession, my Pastoral Relation to the Congregation of *Orwell* shall still be held firm and valid; and that if, in Consequence of this my present Secession, any Thing shall be done by the present Judicatories in Prejudice of my Pastoral Relation to the said Congregation, or in Prejudice of my Ministerial Office and the Exercise thereof, &c. the same shall be held and reputed null and void; in regard I desire and hope, thro' Grace, still to adhere to our Covenanted Uniformity, both in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government, which is not only sullied, but subverted by the present Judicatories, not only in the Particulars I have represented, but in others that may be afterward more fully laid open.

And, *Finally*, I protest, That my Ministerial Conduct and Character, both now and hereafter, shall only be under the Trial and Cognisance of the foresaid Ministers associate together. And I crave, that
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this my Declaration and Protestation be recorded in the Presbytery Books, and I allowed an Extract thereof. And upon the whole of the Premises I take Instruments.

THOMAS MAIR.

After reading the above *Declaration*, the Reverend Mr. *Ralph Erskine* Minister at *Dunfermline* gave in to the *Presbytery* a sign'd *Adherence* to the same; and he also represented, that the said Paper was a just *Double* of his *Adherence* given in to the *Presbytery* of *Dunfermline* at their foresaid Meeting; And the same was read, the *Tenor* whereof follows.

I Hereby adhere to the same Protestation as above, with the Grounds thereof, as sufficient, complexly considered; and to the same Secession, but under the Limitation, and in the Sense following, which I think fit to explain more fully than is above expressed. I having been called forth in Providence to lay before this Presbytery, as well as formerly before the Commission of the General Assembly, the forementioned Representation and Testimony, not only judge it my Duty to adhere thereunto, but also judge it would be a sinful Omission in me, not to embrace any Opportunity Providence shall offer, in Conjunction with others, for emitting to this, and transmitting to the rising Generation, the same Testimony more fully, which I have offered to the Judicatories in shorter Hints, and for doing it in as formal and explicate a Way as can be; which I think, not only the four Brethren above-mentioned, in their present Situation, but also any other Part or Number of the Ministers of this Church meeting together in the Name of the Lord, may lawfully do; especially in a Day of the Lord's Anger on account of the Sins, Errors and Backslidings of the Church; in order to bear Witness for the Cause of Christ and his Truths, and against the Defections of the Church and Land wherein they live. And the four Brethren being
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particularly stirred up to this Work by a remarkable Chain of Providences, I think myself obliged to join with them in this Matter; not as they are a Presbytery or Judicatory separate from the Church of *Scotland*, but as they are a Part of that same Church, constituting themselves in the Lord's Name as a Judicatory of Ministers associate together, distinct from the present Judicatories of this Church, and witnessing against their Corruptions and Defections; insomuch that, by withdrawing from these Judicatories at present, and joining with the said Brethren, I intend and understand no Withdrawing from Ministerial Communion with any of the godly Ministers of this National Church, that are groaning under, or wrestling against, the Defections of the Times, even tho' they have not the same Light with us in every Particular contained in the foresaid Testimony. Nor do I hereby intend to preclude myself from the Liberty of returning and joining with the Judicatories of this Church, upon their returning to their Duty, and so far as my Joining with the foresaid or any other Ministers in their lifting up the said Testimony, and promoting the End and Design thereof, and the said Return can consist together; seeing, if the Judicatories, who at present either unjustly refuse, or unduly delay, to receive that Testimony, were acting a contrary Part, and putting Hand to Reformation, the same Reasons that induce to this Withdrawing, would necessarily induce to a Returning, which I cordially wish I may quickly see good Reason for.

So that (as an eminent Light in this Church expresses it on another Occasion) "Here is no Separation from the Church of *Scotland*, either in her Doctrine, Worship, Discipline or Government; but rather a Cleaving more closely thereto, by departing or going forth from her Backslidings and Defections, as we are commanded by the Lord," and from some Judicatories because of these; "and only a negative, passive and conditional Withdrawing."

“ drawing:” not importing any “ Resolution never
 “ to join with them in any Circumstance, but a pre-
 “ sent refusing to follow the declining Part of the
 “ Church, while carrying on these Defections,
 “ and a Choosing rather to stand still and cleave to
 “ that Part, tho’ smaller, that is endeavouring to
 “ retain and maintain a Covenanted Reformation.”
 Which Reformation, and the standing Obligation
 of our Covenants, National and Solemn League,
 I was obliged judicially to own, both when licensed
 and ordain’d in this Presbytery; insomuch that I
 look upon this present Step I make, for asserting
 and advancing these Covenanted Principles, and op-
 posing the Defections made therefrom, to be every
 Way agreeable and consequential to these Solemn
 Vows and Engagements.

And tho’ I am sensible what a bad Tendency Di-
 vision natively has, and desire to abhor and shun all
 divisive Principles and Practices, contrary to the
 Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline of
 the Church of *Scotland*, agreeable to and founded
 upon the Word of God; and judge it my Duty to
 endeavour, thro’ Grace, to follow after that Peace
 that has Truth for the Ground and Ornament of it;
 yet the safest Way for pursuing Peace, being to
 cleave unto Jesus Christ who is the Centre of all
 true and holy Union, and to advance the Truth as it
 is in him; I therefore think myself obliged, leaving
 Events to the Lord, to take the present Opportunity
 of joining with other Brethren, in what I reckon a
 faithful Testimony for it, such as I have no Access
 to promote in the same Manner with the foresaid
 Judicatories as presently stated. Adhering therefore
 to the above Protestation and Secession as here ex-
 plained, I thereupon take Instruments.

RALPH ERSKINE.

After reading the above *Adherence*, Mr. *Mair* de-
 clared to the *Presbytery*, That he was of the same
 Mind with his Brother Mr. *Ers_kine*: And both the
 said

said Brethren further represented, That they had read and considered the *Act* and *Testimony* approved by this *Presbytery* the *third* Day of *December* last, and that they *adhered* to the same. And also they declared, That they were willing to *join* themselves to this *Presbytery* as *Members* thereof. After reading of both the above Papers, and hearing their Brethren fully thereupon, the *Presbytery* proceeded to *consider* the same; and they *found*, That the *Grounds* upon which their Reverend Brethren had declared a *Secession* from the present *Judicatories* of the Church of *Scotland*, were the same upon the Matter with these upon which the *Ministers* of this *Presbytery* had sometime ago declared their *Secession* from the said *Judicatories*. And further, the said Brethren having declared their *Adherence* to the *Act* and *Testimony* concluded at *Perth*; and their Willingness to *join* themselves to this *Presbytery* as *Members* thereof: Therefore they unanimously agreed to receive them. *Likewise*, the *Presbytery* did and hereby do, cheerfully receive and admit their Reverend Brethren, Mr. *Ralph Erskine* Minister of the Gospel at *Dunfermline*, and Mr. *Thomas Mair* Minister of the Gospel at *Orwell*, as *Members* of this *Presbytery*, and appoint their Names to be added to their *Presbytery-roll*. And this being intimated to them, they took their Seats accordingly.

Extracted by

J A. FISHER *Cls. Pres*

